AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH

SOCCER

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SPIRIT SINK STALLIONS

Spirit hold onto Marconi home record

Northern Spirit's Simon Catanzaro streaks away from Marconi's Brendan Renaud at North Sydney Oval last Friday night. Marconi's run of defeats North of the Harbour continued with the club still unable to secure a victory in four outings. Unlucky as they were the Stallions managed a late consolation to Danny Invincibile to score the first goal on North Sydney Oval to go down narrowly 2-1.

Full report on page 11.

Wollongong Wolves to sign mystery English import

By John Economos

The Wollongong Wolves are most anxiously expecting tonight (Tuesday) the arrival in Sydney of a goalscoring 'mystery midfielder' from England as the Club turns up the heat in the race for the Minor League Championship.

The mystery 23 year old blond midfielder agreed to terms over the week-end with Wollongong officials and will sign a contract on his arrival in Sydney tonight.

Head coach Nick Theodorakopoulos when contacted last night by ABSW stated: "I know this player very well and he would fit in very nicely into my team and would greatly stiffen our midfield.

"I'm very sure he will surprise many people when he arrives," Theodorakopoulos underlined.

It's been 12 years since Wollongong won its first, and only Minor League Championship under coach John Fleming.

Now the ambitious 35 year old Theodorakopoulos passionately wants to duplicate that deed.

Having lost just five matches from 25 outings, Wollongong has amassed 54 goals, seven more than League leaders Sydney Olympic.

"It's goals galore and it's goals that win matches, that's why I've heavily based my strategies on attack.

Continued on page 3

Nick Theodorakopoulos: Head coach.

MARK BOSNICH COLOUR POSTER

THE GOOD OIL ... PAGES 4-5

OLYMPIC'S SUCCESS PAGE 8

NSL CLOCKS 5000 PAGE 7

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NEW JOEYS ANNOUNCED

A squad of 33 players has assembled for a preliminary Under-17s Camp, as preparations begin for Australia's next assault on the FIFA Under-17 World Youth Cup.

LES SCHEINFLUG, who took up the position of Technical Director of National Teams & Elite Player Development after guiding the LG Joeys to a Silver Medal at last year's event is running the Camp, in the interim period between Soccer Australia's appointment of the next National Youth Coach, which will occur later this year.

. "I'm getting things ready for the next Coach, with the qualifiers almost around the corner this December in Samoa," he said from the Camp's Parklea Headquarters today.

"Obviously once the next Coach is appointed, he will go on and do his own thing, but at least the basis of the Squad has been established.

"It's always great to see the young talent coming through, we have some excellent talent in this camp, and that augers well for our continued performances at the National Level.

"The players have been assembled from all over the country, and have been identified via their State Teams, Youth Championships and

the National Under-15 Titles which were held recently.

"Apart from being a little water-logged, I feel it's been a good introduction for these boys, we've been able to get in quite

a few training sessions and a couple of games, and they've got the basics of what can be expected to pull on the green and gold."

The 33-man LG Joey Squad is:

Carl VALERI	ACT
Adrien LABUTTE	ACT
Steven ARNOTT	ACT
Sean WALSH	QLD
Daniel VARMA	QLD
Ben STEVENS	QLD
Andrew BYRNE	QLD
Nathan COE	QLD
Alex DAVANI	QLD
Fred AGIUS	SA
James FORDE	SA
Mario KARLOVIC	SA
Terry SMITH	SA
Adam VAN DOMMELE	SA
Russell WALLER	SA
Fred AU	VIC
Steve ESPOSITO	VIC
David PUCCIO	VIC
Massimo MURDOCCA	VIC
Michael EDWARDS	VIC
Theo PETDIS	VIC
Darren BROXTON	WA
Anthony DANZE	WA
Ryan FREDRICKS	WA
Gokhan ADA	NSW
Steven BAVEAS	NSW
Predrag BOJIC	NSW
Michael BROWN	NSW
Stephen HALLINAN	NSW
Brett HOLMAN	NSW
Jacob REX	NSW
Phillip WESTON	NSW
Matthew ENGELE	NSW

Les Scheinflug: Technical Director.

ABSW'S FULL AND COMPREHENSIVE NSL WRAP

SEE PAGES 11-13

ANNOUNCEMENT

FRANKSTON PINES SC

To any player who has ever played along side David Ferris of the Frankston Pines Soccer Club over the past 20 years or against him, the club is holding a testimonial game and dinner in honour of his long and dedicated service to the Frankston Pines Soccer Club on Sunday May 7.

Festivities start at 1pm.

Admission for the game and dinner is $10 per head.

For bookings ring Alan Hodkinson at the club on (03) 9786 0542.

ANNOUNCEMENT

FIRST ANNUAL SOCCER PROGRAMME AWARDS

This year is the first in which soccer programmes from Australia and New Zealand will be reviewed and awarded prizes. The awards are open to ANY soccer club in Australia and New Zealand and all they have to do is submit at least three (3) different editions of their match-day programme. Awards will be on offer for various categories, including:

* The best NSL programme.
* The best Australian programme (outside the NSL system)
* The best New Zealand programme (outside the NSL system)
* The best State-wide programme (depending upon the number of entries in a particular state)

The criteria that the judges will be looking at include:

* Readability and Layout
* Provision of Information (incl. news, fixtures, ladders, team line-ups and scores)
* Visitors Information.
* Value for Money.

ACT SOCCER - FEDERATION CUP

By Graham Cooke

Capital City Suns were the big improvers in Round 3 matches of the Federation Cup, defeating Weston Creek Royals 3-1 at Deakin Oval on Sunday (12 March).

Although missing a berth in the Cup's semi finals next weekend, Suns' coach Bill Dojcinoski was happy to end the series with a win. " We narrowly lost our first match against Tuggeranong, then we came back with a 3-3 draw with Olympic, and now a victory over Weston. I am very happy that we have improved with each game."

The Suns started the match well and rattled the Weston defence with a number of raids. Their forays remained unsuccessful until after 19 minutes, midfielder Dion Cannell collected a ball from Goran Josifovski, evaded several defenders and curved the ball past Weston's goalkeeper.

Tony Radic made it 2-0 just a couple of minutes later, running unchallenged down the right and guiding the ball in from a tight angle.

It was not until 25 minutes into the second half that Weston found some response to the Suns' domination. Substitute Tim Webb's goal gave the Creek's supporters some hope.

It was short-lived however as Stevie Lee, in a just reward for an energetic match, gave Suns its third in the 80th minute, tapping in a rebound from his own initial chip .

In other matches, Canberra Olympic drew 2-2 with Tuggeranong Utd, Monaro found some long absent form to down Belconnen Utd 3-1 and Gungahlin Juventus defeated ANU 5-0.

PERTH OVAL TO GET FACELIFT

By Richard Kreider

The West Australian Government is about to receive a request from the Town of Vincent to contribute to a $2.8million redevelopment of Perth Oval after Perth Glory indicated their long term intentions at the ground.

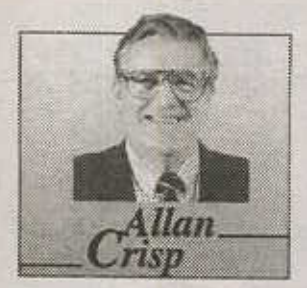
The move comes following Glorys announcement they are to spend $600,000 for floodlights and an unknown amount for clubrooms that will be ready for the start of next season. The upgrade and long term commitment is not expected to affect the governments multi-purpose rectangular stadium which has been planned for the city as part of a convention centre and will be ready in about two years time. Perth Oval will simply be used for its supporters, as a training ground and as an optional playing venue.

The agreement to play at the East Perth ground expires on May 7 but Glory has two further one-year options which it will certainly accept as it waits for the government stadium.

Glory pay $5000 a match to the Town of Vincent and $130,000 a season to the other tenants, East Perth Football Club. The Oval however, is in need of almost $500,000 of restoration work. Extra renovation work would cost a further $1.3million while an assessment carried out last October has recognised another $1million would be required to finish the upgrade. The news hasn't come quick enough for those supporters who have been staying away from the games because of the hot weather.

Bernd Stange: New contract last week and now a new oval.

OFF THE CROSSBAR



MAKRIS BACK IN THE NEWS

The rumours persist in the City of Churches that former West Adelaide Sharks owner Con Makris is making a bold bid to buy a controlling interest in the Wollongong Wolves.

Basil Scarsella: Adelaide has the capacity for two NSL clubs.

Makris, reportedly an unabashed admirer of Wolves coach Nick Theodorakopoulos, has admitted his interest in the high riding club, but has indicated he would not consider relocating the club to Adelaide.

"The deal is almost 99 per cent complete and I hope to be a 51 per cent owner in the next few weeks," Makris said.

Meanwhile, Adelaide United and the South Australian Soccer Federation are both pressing ahead with plans to present bids to enter the National Soccer League in the 2000/01 season.

Inspired by encouraging comments from Soccer Australia chairman Basil Scarsella that Adelaide has the capacity to support two NSL clubs, the Peter Emery chaired Adelaide United and the SASF consortium are emerging as bitter rivals to join Adelaide City Force in the big time.

The players who represented the State in the recent friendly games against the visiting Japanese teams are expected to be front runners to play for the SASF club.

CLAUDIO BACK FROM ITALY

Adelaide City striker Claudio Pelosi is due to return from a rush trip to Italy tomorrow (Wednesday) to take his place in the Force team to clash with Newcastle Breakers at Hindmarsh Stadium on Friday.

Pelosi took advantage of City's matchless weekend to visit his father, who has been ill. City youngster Matt Kemp also flew home to Canberra where he was reunited with family and friends for the first time since the start of the NSL season.

ANOTHER MITCH ON THE SCENE

The blood lines are thick at Campbelltown City. When the Red Devils toppled White City 3-0 last Saturday, Simon Mitchell, 17, nephew of Parramatta Power coach David Mitchell, made his second appearance for the club at senior level.

Simon is the third generation Mitchell to represent the reds, following in the footsteps of his grandfather Jim and his father Jimmy.

Devils coach John Evans holds Simon in high regard, "Simon is tall, fast, has a fine endurance base and a great appetite for the game.

Young Simon was introduced off the bench midway through the second half of Saturday's match and scored Campbelltown's third goal.

But the game ended on a sour note for Mitchell, who emulated his uncle Dave with a higher flying header, only to crash heavily and dislocate his collar bone.

"The injury is expected to keep Simon out of action for at least four to six weeks," Evans lamented.

Wollongong Wolves to sign mystery English import

Continued from front page

"We have an enormous amount of team-spirit and have so many goalscorers that it's become impossible for any coach in the NSL to set out and hope to man mark them all out," proudly boasted the Wolves hungry coach.

Second placed on ladder and just one point behind League leaders Sydney Olympic, the high scoring Wollongong outfit has 12 players that have nailed the target to date.

Last Sunday night when the Wolves came from behind to demolish the Auckland Kingz 5-1 at Brandon Park, no less than five players shared the spoils in scoring.

Outstanding goal-ace has been U.K. import striker Stuart Young who to date tops the Club's goalscoring charts with 12 goals.

The highly experienced, well balanced and free scoring Young, since his arrival earlier this season from playing in Singapore, has turned out to be a most valuable acquisition for the attack-conscious Wollongong side.

Young not only is a lethal finisher, but by using his peripheral vision to perfection has become an excellent creator of goals to boot.

Wollongong's squad has a healthy and strong spread of goalscorers.

Esala Masi, Saso Petrovski, Dino Mennillo, Scott Chipperfield and team captain Matty Horsley have all been successful marksmen this season.

Even people from Wollongong's 'Department of Defence' such as David Cervinski, Neil Harlock, Alvin Ceccoli, George Souris, Paul Reid and Ben Blake have all contributed to the Wolves' glut of goals.

Wollongong this Saturday night travels to Mobil Park to take on the Gippsland Falcons.

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OLYMPIC GAMES 2000 SQUAD MEMBER

Profile N° 162

DRAGI NASTEVSKI

Date Of Birth: January 26, 1977.
Birthplace: Melbourne.
Previous Clubs: Thomastown, V.I.S.
Current Club: Melbourne Knights.
Current Position: Right midfielder.
Nickname: 'Drags'.
Occupation: Student studying 'Town Planning' -Bachelor of Urban Studies.
Best Aspect Of Your Game: Vision and crossing.
Most Difficult Opponent: Zeljko Susa.
Most Impressive Local Player: Joe Didulica.
Favourite Overseas Player: Hayden Foxe.
Favourite Overseas Club: Barcelona.
What Qualities Make For A Good Coach: To be a good communicator and good on discipline.
Honours: Under 17s, 20s, Olympic squad, Senior squad vs Manchester United 1999.
Ambitions For 2000: Make the Olympic Games and to improve both as a person and player.
Most Memorable Moment: 1995-96 with the Melbourne Knights when we beat Marconi 2-1 in the Grand Final.
Most Regrettable Moment: Not having scored a goal in the NSL as yet.
Hobbies Outside Soccer: A.F.L. and watching movies.
Best Goal You've Seen Scored: Zoran Markovski vs South Melbourne scoring own-goal 1996.
Favourite Food: 'Maznik' (a cheese pastry).
Favourite Drink: Jack Daniels & Dry.
Car You Drive: V.W.
Favourite T.V. Show: Cheers.
T.V. Show You Refuse To Watch: Judge Judy.
Favourite Movie: Braveheart.
Favourite Actor-Actress: Pierce Bosman and Vivien Leigh.
Preferred Music: Any.
Least Preferred Music: None.
Favourite Comedian: Zoran Markovski.
Pet Hates: Zeljko Susa always looking in the mirror.
Person You Would Like To Meet: Michael Jordan and Muhammed Ali.

By John Economos

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil

By John Economos

JOHN PEROSH, the Northern Spirit's back-up keeper, was last week surprisingly loaned out to Sydney Olympic till the end of the current season.

League leaders Olympic were desparate to stiffen their goalkeeping department after Jimmy Kourtis had suffered a broken foot a few weeks back.

Olympic's coach Branko Culina knows Perosh exceptionally well when both were employed at Sydney United just over three years back.

Last Sunday night in the home match against the Gippsland Falcons at Belmore Sports Ground, Perosh made his debut for his new club in spectacular style.

The courageous goalkeeper made no less than four spectacular life-saving blocks that ultimately enabled an out of form Sydney Olympic to narrowly win the match 1-0 and retain their leadership in the National League for yet another week.

●●●●

SOUTH MELBOURNE's administration offices were closed from last Thursday up until yesterday (Monday).

The only reason for the closure was due to last week-end's Formula One Grand Prix and Labor Day.

●●●●

PABLO CARDOZO, Sydney Olympic's ace goalscorer was last week rumoured to be linking up with the Northern Spirit next season.

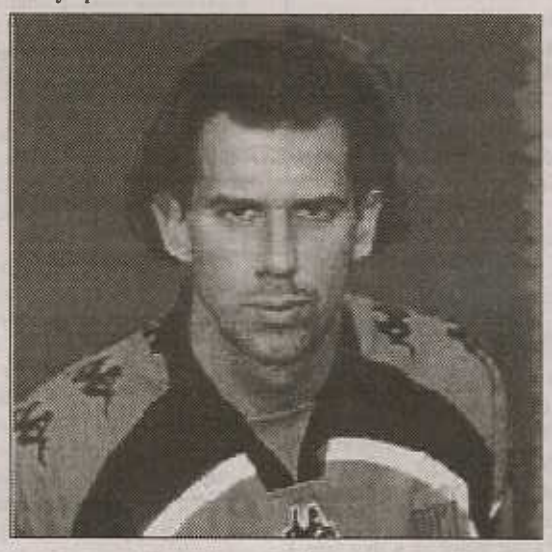
Not quite so says 'Good Oil'.

The ball-playing striker who will be out of contract with Olympic in June, has right now two very firm and lucrative offers from European clubs that he is seriously considering.

●●●●

HAYDEN FOXE, Australia's Olympic goascoring defender has been back in Sydney the past fortnight recuperating from stress fractures to his foot.

The magnificent, intelligent red-haired defender participated in the pre-season training camp staged in Adelaide with his J-League side Hiroshima coached by former national coach Eddie Thomson.



John Perosh: Spirit 'keeper loaned out to Olympic.

But Thomson wisely permitted Foxe to stay behind in Australia to rest for another three weeks.

●●●●

Hayden Foxe: Back in Sydney resting.

THE MALAYSIAN NATIONAL team that toured NSW last week were exposed to some horrific Australian P.R. treatment by a certain NSL club.

In a friendly match organised between the two sides, the Malaysians were stunned to hear a staccato of foul language bellowing out from the sidelines throughout the match by the Australian club coaching staff.

If that wasn't enough, the referee had inexplicably turned up half an hour late. Great.

And as an added bonus, at the end of the game, the Malaysians were asked to pay the fees for the referee.

For any Australians that have toured Malaysia and experienced the organisation, as well as the hospitality, of the Malaysian Soccer fraternity, (and 'Good Oil' has-twice), they'd be able to understand the very sad and embarrassing treatment they copped last week.

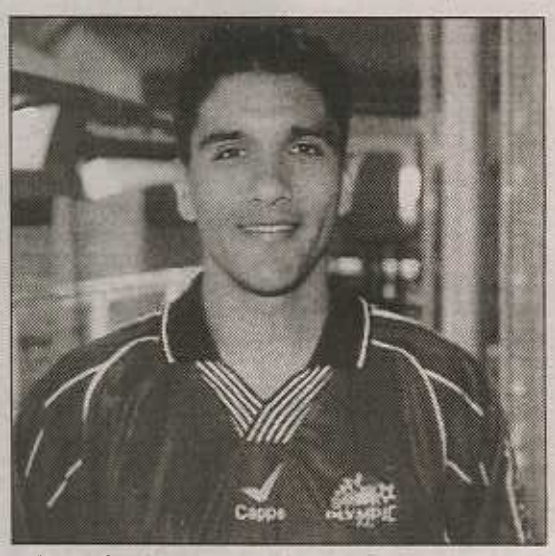
What an absolute disgrace.

●●●●

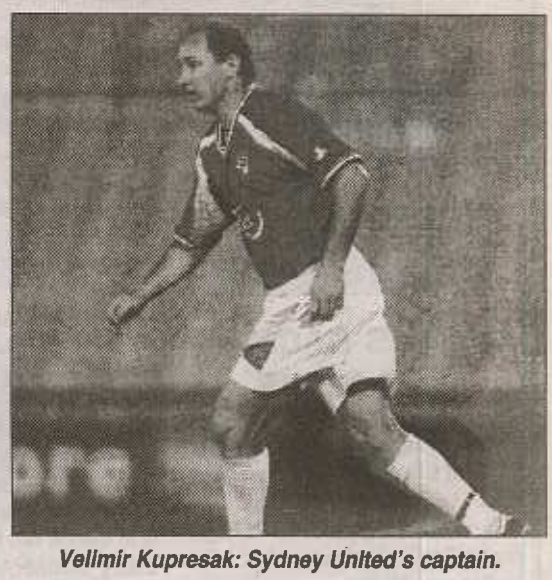
THREE NSL games have had their schedule amended!

Round 27 match Newcastle Breakers vs Canberra Cosmos at the Breakers Stadium will now be played on Saturday March 25 at 7.30 pm.

The match between Sydney United and the Parramatta Power (Round 27) at the Sydney United Sports Centre will now be played on Sunday 26th March at 4.00 pm.



Pablo Cardozo: Olympic's ace striker to head for Europe.



Velimir Kupresak: Sydney United's captain.

In Round 32 the match between Sydney United and the Newcastle Breakers at the Sydney United Sports Centre, will now be played on Tuesday April 25 starting at 4pm.

Meanwhile Velimir Kupresak, Sydney United's magnificent long-serving stopper warhorse, is not on the mend following surgery to his knee.

Unfortunately for 'Vela' it now appears that he is unlikely to take the pitch again this season.

Meanwhile the sterling stopper has been acting as assistant coach to Ivan Petkovic with the senior team whilst 'Vela' waits for his knee to recover.

●●●●

AUSTRALIAN YOUTH players must always be encouraged to graduate into the senior ranks of NSL teams.

That should be unquestionably so.

If the young players have the talent, discipline, character and obviously the correct attitude, of course they should be shoved into senior squads in the NSL.

But what hugely irks 'Good Oil' is when some cocky coach comes along and shoots off his mouth how he has always spotted, then promoted, 'Youth' into all the sides that he has handled in the League over recent years.

One such 'cocky coach' of today seems to have 'overlooked,' a few facts.

At one NSL team he took over a few years ago, already a predecessor had upgraded no less than seven players, 17 years of age and under.

Sure that 'predecessor' struggled at that club for a few months with all these kids he had upgraded into the one team.

But he stuck with them.

Eventually this 'predecessor' got the sack because results were understandably erratic.

So when our 'cocky coach' came along and eventually took over the squad, these 'kids' already had had almost four years of exposure in the NSL with an average age of 21.

Six of these 'kids' eventually became internationals for Australia.

Five of them are currently on fulltime contracts with European clubs.

Yet our said 'cocky coach' hijacked credit for all this.

The same coach again recently boasted that whilst he was at another club, it was HE that 'promoted' no less than three outstanding 'prospects' that HE 'developed', and that HE upgraded into the senior NSL team.

Not so again 'cocky coach'.

'Good Oil' again vividly remembers what really happened.

When our 'cocky coach' arrived at this club, all three of those outstanding prospects had been previously identified, then drafted and developed, at the A.I.S. whilst in their mid-teens the previous 18 months.

So, a quiet word of advice to our above and ambitious 'cocky coach'.

One, you are certainly not the first to try and hijack credit for the development of young players done by others.

Two, if you really desire to become a quality coach, much humility, plus self-honesty, has to be learned.

Both of these qualities are vital priorities for any potential professional.

These priorities can easily be acquired by taking lessons from his gorgeous wife who just happens to excel in both.

●●●●

WOLLONGONG WOLVES were last night (Monday), expecting the arrival of their new mystery signing from England.

His identity is also expected to surprise a few people around the traps according to head coach Nick Theodorakopoulos who wants to keep the heat at boiling point on League leaders Sydney Olympic who the Wolves trail by a single point.

Theodorakopoulos hopes to

The Good Oil ... The Good Oil ...

By John Economos

rush his new British star into his side on Saturday night for the Wolves' away-clash against the Gippsland Falcons.

Nick Theodorakopoulos: Wollongong's ambitious head coach.

●●●●

BUDDY FARAH, Marconi's strapping sweeper or defensive midfielder is expecting to head for Europe at the end of this current season.

The tenacious Farah has already attracted the strong attention of two European clubs.

Farah's manager has him lined up with Denmark's F.C. Copenhagen and Czech champions Sparta Prague.

However Buddy who recently became a father for the first time, stated to 'Good Oil': "The two clubs

Buddy Farah: Off to Europe at the end of this season.

wanted me over there now, but Marconi has been very good to me and I would very much like to stay here till the Play-offs and hope that we do well in them."

●●●●

Luke with wife Gracie: Seen here at a social function.

LUKE CASSERLY, the Northern Spirit's aggressive utility defender, flew out of Sydney late last Friday afternoon bound for Spain for two weeks trials with first division Swedish side AIK Solna.

AIK Solna is currently in Spain for two weeks pre-season training and the ambitious Casserly is most hungry to crack a contract with the Swedes.

●●●●

SYDNEY OLYMPIC, hungrily chasing their first Minor League Championship, could be in dire straits and struggle over the next few weeks with the Wollongong Wolves and Perth Glory in joint hot pursuit right on their heels.

The current slender League leaders will be without the services of their in-form star flank midfielder Brett Emerton who flew out with the Australian Olympic squad today for Europe.

Severely compounding this significant loss, is the almost certain and horrific news that Olympic has lost for the rest of the season their wizard playmaker Gabriel ('Chi Chi') Mendez. The ball-playing midfielder badly twisted his knee last Sunday night at the Belmore Sports Ground in the first session and was unable to come out for the second half against the Gippsland Falcons.

It is now feared that Mendez will have to undergo yet another operation.

Since 1993 Mendez has already had no less than three operations to his damaged knees.

●●●●

ADELAIDE CITY the long-standing 'Aristocrats' of the National League, in a brave attempt to boost its recent falling home crowds, has made a colourful television commercial that is screened on Channel 9 for all coming home games.

The 'Black and Whites' are confident that the commercials will yield them dividends by broadening the Club's appeal as well as increasing Player profiles and awareness to the South Australian 'Joe Public'.

●●●●

SYDNEY OLYMPIC today (Tuesday) will pay a goodwill visit to the New Children's Hospital at Westmead.

A select band of Olympic players led by skipper Peter Tsekenis, will make their second trip to the wonderful

Gabriel ('Chi Chi') Mendez: Seriously in doubt for rest of season.

and ultra modern Hospital to try and brighten the day of the young residing patients.

●●●●

SBS-TV, (is there any other real Channel for Soccer?), has done it again.

The Super Soccer Channel will bring in the Live and exclusive telecast of the Czech Republic vs Australia game at 12:45am (Eastern states) Thursday March 29th. South Australia and Darwin will receive the telecast at 12:15 am whilst Perth will get it on Wednesday night at 10:45pm. The Live telecast will be beamed in direct from Teplice as Australia battles the national team of the Czech Republic that currently is ranked by F.I.F.A. as second behind the mighty Brazil. SBS tomorrow night (Wednesday) on its nightly sports bulletin programme-Toyota World Sports (7 pm) will screen a special report on the controversial and newly remodelled Hindmarsh Stadium in Adelaide.The Stadium recently has been engulfed by controversy involving politicians and management.

Designed and updated significantly for the coming Olympics at great extravagance, it's envisaged that the Stadium could become a 'white elephant' after the Games have concluded.

●●●●

FRANK AROK, Sydney Olympic's Technical Director of Coaching and former National coach, will be parting company at the end of this season with Olympic. The 64 year old Arok with his extremely lovely wife Gordana, want to retire and return to their native Yugoslavia, (Novi Sad in fact), to make up much lost time with their only daughter Marijana and grandchildren.

Arok was first brought to Australia in 1969 by St George Budapest who installed him as the first fulltime manager-coach in Australian Soccer.

In 1983 whilst still coaching the Saints, Arok was installed as national coach, a position he held till 1990.

Frank Arok: Calls it a day from Australian Soccer.

During his reign over the Australian team, Arok challenged two World Cup campaigns as well as taking Australia to the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

●●●●

EMPOLI last week won the Final of the prestigious Viareggio Youth Tournament by beating Fiorentina 2-1.

Marconi's Youth team that had also participated in the Tournament did not qualify for Phase 2.

MARCONI STALLIONS V SYDNEY OLYMPIC

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PRESTON WANTS SECOND DIVISION

By Bert van Bedaf

Preston president George Nestorovski wants a second division of the national league introduced by October 2001.

The former national league club, relegated from the country's top league eight years ago, wants toreturn to national involvement as soon as possible, and sooner rather than later.

Having reforms delayed by Soccer Australia after pressure from NSL clubs by another year is not to Nestorovski's liking. Since reforms are inevitable, he believes further delays would be a waste of time.

"We must introduce and implement the second division by October 2001," Nestorovski said. "How long can we afford to run clubs that are going nowhere," he asked.

"A second division will broaden the code in the sporting arena. It will bring back our former (NSL) supporter base. The sort of crowds we had 10 or 15 years ago. A higher division will also increase the standard of skills and the development and number of players.

"But some of the national league clubs feel threatened (being axed from the top league). But big deal, there are other clubs who have ambitions," he said.

Costs and financial sponsorship pressures for clubs playing in state premier leagues are increasing. Sponsors want value for their dollars, and more funds are required for clubs to afford improved grounds, higher quality players to attract bigger crowds and more media attention as well as finance junior set-ups.

Financial stakeholders demand greater exposure and a higher-level competition, which at the moment is unavailable. In Victoria, the title winner earns $10,000 prize money, less than its affiliation fees, Nestorovski said.

Preston employs full-time its senior coach, Dragan Blazeski, who came out from Macedonia before the start of the Victorian Premier League. It also has a full time goalkeeper coach, Mustafa Pestalic.

Women have free entry to home games at B.T. Connor Reserve to attract more families to its matches.

"Against Heidelberg, we had 1200 paying spectators and the numbers are increasing," Nestorovski said.

But the Preston president wants more initiatives from the Victorian Soccer Federation to boost interest in the VPL competition.

"We should restructure the VPL to a summer season as of this year. It will give clubs more time to prepare for a second division. We should (re)introduce a Cup competition (the Dockerty Cup was abandoned three years ago) and a top-five finals play-off should be re-introduced," Nestorovski suggested.

"Top five prize-money should also be increased. It has been much the same for the last three or four years. It does not compensate for VSF affiliation fees," he said.

"Eight years ago, after relegation from the national league, Preston found itself in the VPL. We won a second premiership and a year later we found ourselves in the State League for a season. We're back in the VPL, but we want to wed the past to a more successful standing. A second division is the club's best opportunity to move on," he said.

BULLEEN RIFT RESOLVED

By Bert van Bedaf

Bulleen president, Michael Catalano has moved quickly to heal any rifts that may have occurred between coach Alan Davidson and some senior players.

Some differences came to a head a fortnight ago, when captain Danny Gnjidic declared he'd rather step down than continue playing under Davidson.

There had been a clash of personalities and Gnjidic said he "could no longer play under him (Davidson) anymore."

Alan Davidson: Can be volatile on the bench.

The rift climaxed when Gnjidic was told he'd be substituted at half time during the match against Preston in round four. Because his replacement Warren Spink could not take the field because of injury, Gnjidic played out the match, which finished in a 2-2 draw, but some damage had been done.

A former national league player with Heidelberg United, the striker's pride had been hurt and he indicated he'd "lost respect" for Davidson.

Gnjidic said he'd be "prepared to sit out the season", which is his second of a two-season contract with the Zebras.

Davidson believed he was within his rights to replace a player, if that was required to lift the side.

"It all comes down to opinion. It was no big drama for me. But I was disappointed the way he handled it. I respect Danny. We made him captain, but I treat everybody equally. In a team everybody is accountable. If you don't perform, you don't play. All I did was tell him he should come off. I thought we had a good relationship," Davidson said.

Catalano was unhappy the story had come out, preferring it had been kept indoors and resolved quietly.

But Gnjidic will have been part of the team last night, when Bulleen hosted Bentleigh Greens.

"Gnjidic was a bit upset. There was a bit of pride involved. Basically he's missed a game, but it's not a big issue. We had a meeting and last Friday night they (Gnjidic and Davidson) shook hands. Gnidic is back in the team," Catalano said.

"Alan can be volatile on the bench. But he's a great man and you don't crucify him over it. Both have a lot to offer. Soccer needs these sort of people. Having sorted out their differences, I hope it will solidify the team," he said.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA PREMIER LEAGUE

FOXES CAN'T CURE TITLE HANGOVER

By Allan Crisp

Cumberland United continued its riches to rags story by crashing to its fourth successive loss of the new Premier League season on Saturday.

This time the reigning champions capitulated 1-4 to Elizabeth City rams on their prized home turf at Bailey reserve to sink to the bottom of the barrel and hang an incredible minus-nine goal difference around their neck.

Alby Kidd's weakened Rams conquered the Foxes despite taking the field minus suspended pair, Aaron Westervelt and Danny Reynolds, and romped to a 4-0 lead by the 51st minute.

A consolation goal from Bosnian import Mirzat Jusufovic gave Cumberland scant reward for its considerable efforts, but the championship hangover persisted.

Respective goalkeepers, Matt Peace (Foxes) and Daniel Godley (Rams) were outstanding in highlighting the attacking zest of the exciting contest.

Blue Eagles provided a stark contrast to the Foxes wretched run by posting an impressive 2-0 win over Raiders at neutral Pirate Park where former Adelaide City and Wollongong hotshot Michael Brooks bagged a brace to ally a huge six goals from four games.

Brooksie revived memories of his magnificent 1996 season with White City when he netted 36 times from 32 outings to claim the Sergio Melta Medal as the Premier League Player of The Year.

Perfectionist Eagles coach Zoran Karadzic currently has the perfect record with 12-goals for and none conceded after 360 minutes of championship claiming football.

The Blues this week tackled third placed Modbury Jets in a tantalising Friday night fixture at Golden Grove.

Modbury, 2-0 victory over Port Lion last Friday, will be aiming to retain their record of not having allowed a home goal.

Steve Townley and ex-Birkalla striker Jason Trimboli counted for the Jets, who counted back from their previous loss to Croydon Kings.

Charley Villani's Birkalla pulled away from the bottom of the ladder by notching its first win of the season over the Milan Ivanovic coached Adelaide City.

Croydon remain within reach of Blue Eagles after a stunning 4-1 success over Metro stars at Polonia Reserve, where all the goals were netted in an action-packed second half.

Campbelltown confirmed its improvement by downing White City 3-0 with ex-Adelaide City fireball Joe Barbaro leading the way with a boosting brace.

SA Premier League Results

Modbury Jets 2 (S. Townley, J. Trimboli) **Port Lion 0. Best** — Modbury: M. Yates, G. Aitken, S. Townley; Port Lion: N/A.

Cumberland Foxes 0 Elizabeth City 4 (S. McMillan 2, A. Thomson (pen), N. Childs. **Best** — Cumberland: M. Jusufovic, A. Iandiorio, M. Peace; Elizabeth: S. McMillan, S. Kidd, D. Godley.

White City 0, Campbelltown Red Devils 3. (J. Barbaro 2, S. Mitchell). **Best** — White City: N/A; Red Devils: A. Perre, P. Beltrame, J. Barbaro.

Raiders 0, Blue Eagles 2 (M. Brooks 2). **Best** — Raiders: G. Haralabakis, S. Morrison, M. Brazzale; Blue Eagles: J. Cutillo, M. Brooks, C. Kokkinoplitis.

Metro Stars 1 (J. Berlingeri) **Croydon Kings 4** (A. Deptula 2, C. Woods, J. Porter). **Best** — Metro Stars: P. Simmons, R. Moore, D. Sabatino; Croydon Kings: S. Barbaro, K. Tosh, J. Perin.

Adelaide City 0, Birkalla 2 (J. Rechichi, J. Fusco). **Best** — City: N. Budin, S. Tunbridge, K. Rees; Birkalla: J. Rechichi, J. Rusco, K. Wilkinson.

State League Results

Seaford 1, Para Hills 2; Adelaide Hills 3, Northern Demons 5; Western Strikers 2, Enfield Falcons 2; Salisbury United 2, Cobras 2; Olympians 2, Panthers 1; Port Pirie City 3, Noarlunga Bulldogs 0.

Round 5 — Premier League

Friday, March 17: Modbury Jets v Blue Eagles; Port Lion v Metro Stars.

Saturday, March 18: Campbelltown v Raiders; Cumberland v White City; Croydon v Adelaide City; Birkalla v Elizabeth City.

Round 5 — State League

Friday, March 17: Panthers v Cobras. **Saturday, March 18:** Enfield v Salisbury; Northern Demons v Western Strikers; Seaford v Hills; Olympic v Port Pirie; Para Hills v Noarlunga.

SA PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Adelaide Blue Eagles	4	4	0	0	12	0	12
Croydon Kings	4	3	0	1	9	3	9
Modbury	4	3	0	1	6	3	9
Elizabeth City	4	2	1	1	12	6	7
Adelaide City	4	2	0	2	8	6	6
Port Adelaide Lion	4	2	0	2	6	5	6
Raiders	4	2	0	2	7	8	6
Campbelltown City	4	2	0	2	6	10	6
Metro Stars	4	1	1	2	6	12	4
W.T. Birkalla	4	1	0	3	5	10	3
White City Warriors	4	1	0	3	2	7	3
Cumberland United	4	0	0	4	2	11	0

NSL GOES FULL CIRCLE

Milestone reached as guest stints continue

By Bert van Bedaf

Soccer, like life, goes around in circles. Melbourne editor Bert van Bedaf put on his seatbelt to experience the ride (or flight).

Last week the national soccer league turned 5000 matches old. Soccer Australia called it a "milestone", but it seemed more like a long and arduous ultra-distance run.

It's a run that, because of size and length, appears to have travelled in a straight line, but in fact has journeyed in a vast circle. Much like life itself.

"Down here", anchored to earth everything seems flat and straight, like an account's yearbook. It is only when you're "up there", gazing down from the relative comfort of an economy class seat on board of a jumbo-jet at something-thousand feet, that you become aware of the earth's rounded contours — a great soccer ball in the sky when viewed from Mir space station.

Sounds, smells, sights usually remind you of past events more so than dates. I can't say April 2, 1977, when Canberra City kicked off the first NSL match against the Adelaide Sharks at the Manu Oval, is so etched in my mind that I clearly remember it.

But I do remember the naming rights sponsor, Phillips. I felt a sense of pride that a Dutch electronics giant stood at the forefront of the world code in Australia. In my parents' Dutch household everything was Phillips.

My father shaved with a Phillips. Our television was Phillips. Every light bulb was a Phillips.

During that time I was so busy "integrating" in Oz society, going to "the footy" in Melbourne that soccer was a long-distance memory for which I subconsciously yearned but to which I had not yet consciously surrendered, although a return to the fold proved imminent.

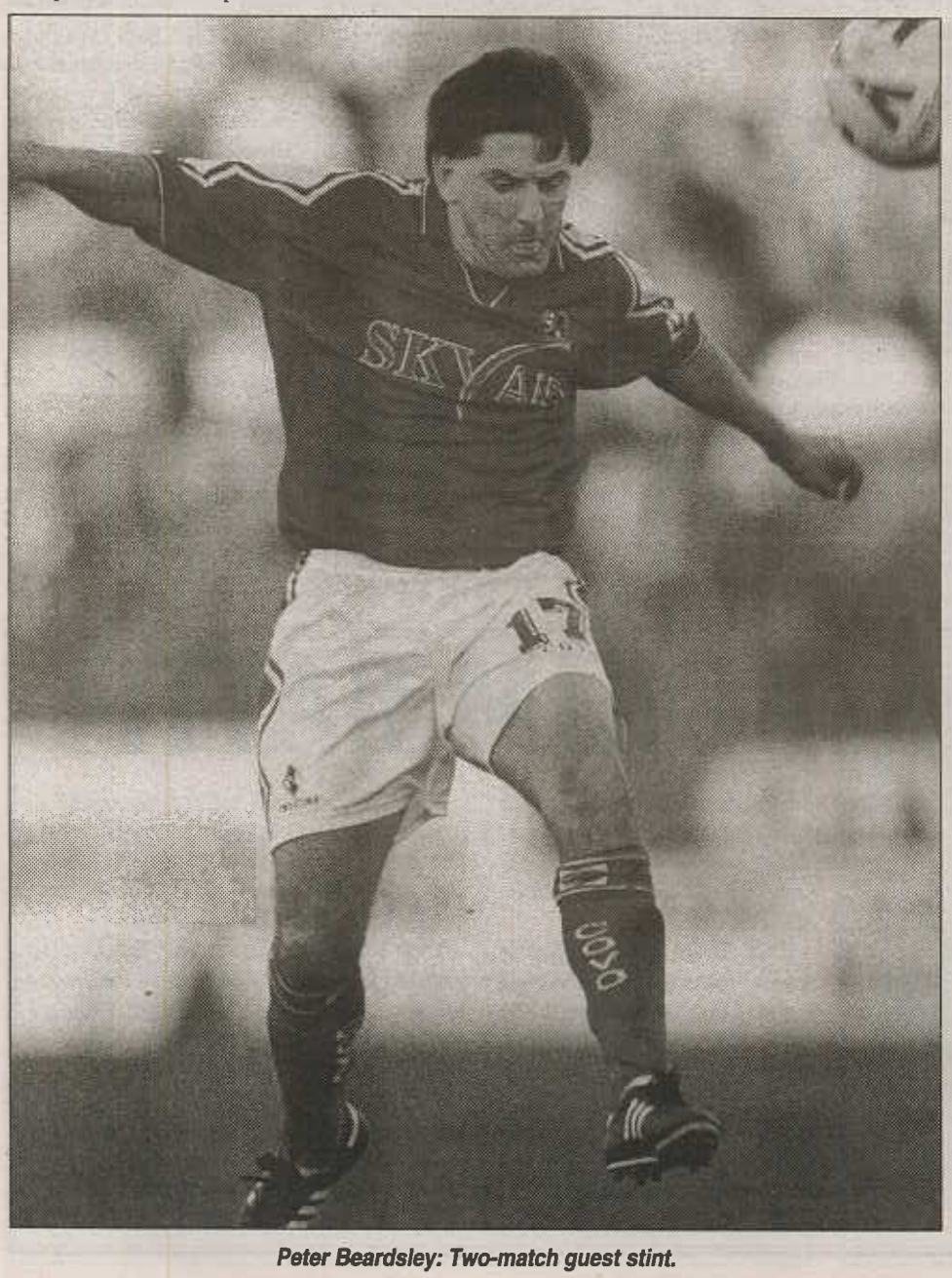
In 1978, I went to work in London for three years and rediscovered soccer — and I've never looked back. Peter Beardsley must have been just making his grand debut with Carlisle United before going on to greater things with Liverpool and World Cup dramatics with England.

So everything comes round in a big circle. Beardsley comes to Australia to play for the Melbourne Knights, making his debut in round 24 of the national soccer league against cross-town rival South Melbourne in March 5. I'm sitting in the press box, observing the spectacle, taking notes.

The guest player phenomenon has returned to Australian soccer like an old rabbit out of a worn hat. The trick's the same, but the effect is less convincing.

Former international luminaries have made their presence felt on Australian soccer fields in the past, such as George Best, Bobby Charlton, current England national coach Kevin Keegan, even Argentine wingman Ossie Ardiles and more recently Ian Rush (Sydney Olympic).

Best, who once lived in a glass house and now struggles with a bad liver, because of long-term alcohol abuse, was the wing-whiz of Manchester United in those 1960s heydays. But by the time he came to Brisbane, he looked like an old boot in need of a polish.



Peter Beardsley: Two-match guest stint.

Nicola Berti: Lengthier guest appearance the way to go.

Former Italy world cup star Nicola Berti is doing a stint at Northern Spirit at the moment and there's talk of Paul Gascoigne, one of the mad men

of British football, coming out some time in the future.

Beardsley will make his second and last appearance for the Knights on Saturday, March 18, against Perth Glory. The Knights are determined to make it another grand occasion and have invited as their special guest local former pugilist Lester Ellis.

A western suburbs boy, who's beaten the living daylights out of the world's best boxing names in his class, Ellis is making his kick-boxing debut the following week and was in need of a promotion.

"If you weren't one of the 11,500 last time against South Melbourne, then don't miss this historical match. It's your last chance to see and meet a genuine footballing legend, alive and kicking in your own backyard," Knights media liaison man Tonci Prusac said about the coming Beardsley match.

The reasons for his presence and the appearances by other former super-players are patently obvious. Despite their fading stamina and skills and advancing years, they still prove powerful drawcards. They're money in the till.

Beardsley attracted a record number of spectators of more than 11,000 to Sunshine and a large section of the crowd had come specifically to watch him at work.

Therefore, the disappointment was palpable when Knights coach Vlado Vanis decided to replace Beardsley after 60 minutes. The Knights lost 4-0.

When Beardsley left the ground it was 1-0. Some blame the anti-climax for the loss. Once Beardsley'd gone, the sense of special occasion had left the arena. The spectacle had been reduced to an ordinary game and the deflation also seemed to have affected the players.

"Thousands of people had come to watch him. He shouldn't have come off.

He could have done something later in the game, a decisive pass, a goal, who knows," former Knights legend and briefly coach Joe Biskic speculated.

Beardsley, who'd witnessed wayward Argentine wizard Maradona handball in England's goal in Mexico in 1986, could not have been more upset. Being dragged in a minor competition rocked him with embarrassment and humiliation.

The hard fact, though, was Beardsley wasn't making much of an impact in the second half. At 39, he looked more an aging actor, who still remembered his lines but could no longer do justice to its nuances, than a star performer.

He appeared out of touch and short of breath but not without commitment or endeavour. Beardsley wasn't tanking. He was doing his best.

Vanis decided it wasn't good enough.

These and other facets, Beardsley later furiously debated and argued.

But not before staying back in the Knights dressing room for over 45 minutes after the match and after deep consultation with his management team, the Team Spirit promotional company, who'd brought him out to Australia.

The resulting chaos yielded some drama with the impatient press pack snarling at his heels. The ensuing storm washed over windy Sunshine like cyclone Steve raged over West Australia.

"Yes, I was pretty disappointed," Beardsley said later. "I didn't find the pace hard at all and I could have played another three games."

Even Knights president Tony Karlusic was perplexed at the shock move by Vanis, saying "Sure, I was surprised when Beardsley got substituted. He believed he had a lot more to give and felt embarrassed."

Vanis was non-plussed by the fuss, saying, "Beardsley was all right.

He's a class player, but I decided to take him off to put on some fresh legs (Michael Reda), when we were a goal down and push forward. He (Beardsley) was seeing less of the ball as the game wore on."

Vanis was, of course, within his rights to adjust the team in any way he saw fit. But as a commercial decision it was as subtle as throwing a brick through an expensively dressed shop window. As far as Beardsley is concerned, he's put a brave gloss on it, saying, "Someone made a decision. It's history now."

Beardsley will make his second, historic appearance at Sunshine on Saturday. He will be playing up front against the Glory and this time no set of horses nor Vanis will be able to take him off prematurely. There's too much pride and money at stake.

Queens Park Soccer Club

Coaches Needed

To coach U6 — U14 age groups.
Also Senior Womens &
Senior Mens Teams

For Saturday or Sunday Competitions.

Experience & qualifications preferred,
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Home Ground: Queens park (beside Centennial Park, in Sydneys Eastern Suburbs).

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THE SECRET TO OUR SUCCESS

Is this Sydney Olympic's year?

By Mark Stavroulakis

Whilst there are numerous reasons behind Sydney Olympic's success this season, it's the word on the terraces of Belmore Sports Ground that say it all.

Coach Branko Culina has much to do with the success as he fills a "hot seat" notorious in recent years for early departures.

Since Culina's introduction the club has gone through massive changes.

Many people thought that Culina's time at Sydney Olympic would be short-lived. Culina however, has turned the tide in more ways than one.

Gaining good results, attaining good players and the fact that Sydney Olympic's name has now become the threshold of the National League has come thanks to the work and efforts of Culina.

Branko's coaching style and techniques were all but concentrated on one main aspect, youth development.

At his first coaching job at the Melbourne Knights, his gamble of using younger players was the centre of attention in the National League.

"In 1992 I was in charge of the Melbourne Knights and I took over mid-season when they were coming mid-table. The main aspect I introduced to the Knights was bringing youth up in order to take the place of the older players.

I wanted to show people that the youth had a spot in the game of soccer and the only way to get the best out of them was to play them.

I had a young Mark Viduka, Steve Horvat, Frank Juric and the Cervinski brothers at that stage that I was pushing up immensely.

"However, people at that club thought that pushing these players up was a mistake, and that my job was at risk due to this. I nevertheless followed my instincts and at the end of the season, players like Viduka who played seven times and scored four goals had made names for themselves," Culina said.

"The Knights had other plans and I was gone from the club the following year, but I knew for a fact that I worked with many young players there such as the abovementioned that would go far.

The following season when Mirko Basic took over as Knights new coach, he had a ready-made team as I had worked with all the youngsters and they had all gained experience of playing first grade football, something that helped that team win the National League that year," Culina said.

In an ironic twist, when Culina took charge at Sydney United he was told to do the opposite — of trying to develop as many youngsters as possible.

"The President at Sydney United at that time was Ivan Simic. He expressed his thoughts that youth is what was needed to get Sydney United back on track. The previous year a man that I respected much, Manfred Schaefer was the head coach at Sydney United.

He introduced discipline into the United squad, which consisted of experienced players and some great youngsters that I could work with.

"I had the big task in going that one step better then that year of Schaefer's, as he guided United into a playoff spot that year, so it was a big risk bringing me to Sydney United.

"From day one I worked with all the players, young and old and made them blend in as one. We achieved many great things in my first year.

"We just missed out on becoming minor premiers, and also made the grand final against the Brisbane Strikers in my last year as coach of United. All this was due to my team bonding sessions at the start of my coaching career at Sydney United.

"Players such as Kalac, Popovich, Zdrilic, Milicic, Ante Moric, Mark Babic, Trajkovski and Enes were all a part of the Australian squad.

"Then I had potential Socceroos such as Jacob Burns, Jason Culina, Eddie Bosnar, also United 'young-gun' Tommy Maric and Croatian international Ante Seric, who were at that time, the future of United. All these players are now either playing in Europe or playing for a National League club every week," Culina continued.

At Olympic, Culina has kept a close eye on many young players. "Joey Dylan Macalister, Lee Miot, Paul Kohler and the ever-exiting Nicky Carle are just some talents that given a few more years will be playing first class football.

"A player that has matured in more ways then one is Peter Zorbas, who is set to become a star of the club. Players such as these and some in the youth team are what will make the future bright for Olympic.

"I took this team last season and have blended in the younger with the more experienced players.

This is something that has helped them in many ways and they have added an extra dimension into their own game and into the depth of my squad, making this team a very useful and powerful unit," Culina ended.

Culina has been riding high this year and as recent results have shown, he's doing an excellent job. Not only at Olympic, but the previous years spent at the Knights and Sydney United, Culina has overcome great odds in transforming a team of nobody's into somebody's.

Branko has introduced a style of play that has shocked many other teams in the National League making Olympic a force to be reckoned with.

And with only a handful of games before the playoffs the question beckons: Is this Olympic's year?

THE HINDMARSH STADIUM BATTLE

Australian television's first and only prime time nightly sports bulletin - Toyota World Sports - screening nightly at 7.00 pm, presents a Special Feature Report on the controversy surrounding Adelaide's Hindmarsh Stadium, this Wednesday, 15 March at 7.00 pm.

Hindmarsh Stadium in Adelaide is Australia's only purpose built soccer arena and lately has been embroiled in controversy and wrangling involving politicians, management and the soccer fraternity.

Although confirmed as one of the major venues for the Olympic football this September, with ticket sales suggesting capacity crowds; after the Olympic circus has left town, Hindmarsh will struggle to survive as a venue for National Soccer League matches and the occasional international.

Initially, the multi million dollar Hindmarsh project was justified by the prospect of Adelaide having three flourishing professional football clubs to keep the turnstiles ticking over.

However with the folding of the Adelaide Rams Super League franchise and the Adelaide Sharks Soccer Club going bust, 30 fixtures have been wiped from the venue's calendar. The one remaining club — three times National Soccer League Champions Adelaide Force — are now feeling the enormous strain in the aftermath.

This Toyota World Sports Special Feature speaks to the people involved in some way with the Hindmarsh Stadium controversy. Interviewees include:

- Ned Coten- former General Manager of Adelaide City SC
- John Nyskohus - former Socceroo and first grade coach of Adelaide City
- Iain Evans - South Australian Minister for Sport
- Les Avory - Head of Soccer South Australia

The Report looks at the Independent Auditor General's inquiry into the Hindmarsh development as well as the animosity that has grown in the South Australian soccer fraternity.

There is no doubt that the audit may clear up some of the controversy surrounding Hindmarsh, but undoubtedly there has been great damage caused to Adelaide by building this 'field of dreams'.

With the 1999/2000 National Soccer League Season in full swing, Toyota World Sports are proud to present this intimate and revealing report - a must for soccer fans in Australia.

DOG DAY AFTERNOON

Harry James pipped at the post

By Graham Cooke

It was close, very close, but in the end the camera could not lie. Champion greyhound Black Tashka got its nose to the line a fraction ahead of Canberra Cosmos speedster Harry James in the battle of the species.

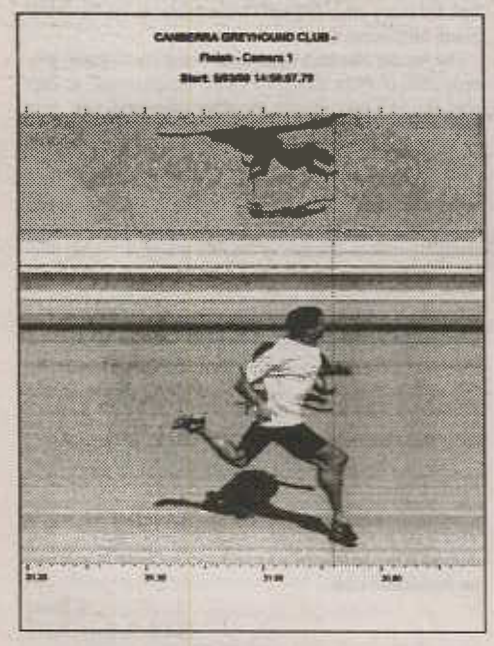


Photo Finish.

Champion Greyhound Black Tashka.

James, who had been given 290 metres start in the 530m handicap event at the Canberra Greyhound Racing Club, said he made the mistake of looking round in the last 50 metres.

"I could see it coming so I really put in, but the photo-finish camera shows that I still had my head turned slightly towards the dog as we were both going over the line and that probably cost me the race," he said.

"But it was great fun, and the crowd got behind me."

His race was part of a joint charity day promotion between the Cosmos and the Canberra Greyhound Racing Club, which attracted a good crowd of both soccer and racing fans.

James, who missed the game against Carlton because of suspension, said he was glad coach Tom Sermanni was there to see the race.

"At least he knows I have been keeping fit over the weekend," he said.

The event raised $4000 for two youth charities, Canteen and Intel.

Cosmos Boys: A day at the races.

WOLLONGONG NEWS

By Otto Bader

Stuart Young, the Wolves striker and newly appointed Media officer, welcomes the birth of his baby son Jacob Matthew. Wife Claire and Stuart are very proud parents, congratulations.

Stuart Young: New addition to the family.

■■■■

Marketing Manager Greg Burgess has arranged the club's annual golf day with enormous response, forcing a cut off since too many entrance applications have swamped the event. Sponsors have not held back to support the Wolves special day. A great success is assured.

■■■■

Still out injured are striker Esala Masi and midfield player Neil Harlock. Both are on the mend and expected to commence light training this week.

Wolves cubs — Junior team co-ordinator Geoff Wilson reports a great start to the season. Against Eastern Suburbs the U/14's won 2-1, the U/15s won 1-0 and the U/16s together with the U/13s won 5-0.

The younger ones also recorded good wins — the U/11s winning 4-1 and the U/12s winning 6-1.

Illawarra Soccer stats this week with round one in the ICU Premier league (12 teams) and the ICU First Division (16 teams).

Both competitions are always keenly contested with teams in first division aiming for promotion while Premier League sides hope to secure a safe spot or even top of the table position.

Players have changed clubs with alleged excellent match payments on offer.

■■■■

Junior soccer in Illawarra also starts this week. Over 8000 youngsters from rooball to U/17s kicking the ball around on hundreds of soccer fields along the coast from Helensburgh to Nowra. Saturday morning junior parents are flat out supporting their siblings.

■■■■

Soccer Illawarra has invited three professionals to fill vacancies on the Board. New directors confirmed are John Vliestra (former Wolves secretary and Trust member), solicitor Vic Couco and accountant Doug Tarrant.

The association does appreciate the interest expressed by the public to assist the Board of Soccer Illawarra.

Administration officer Joan Hudson is now being assisted by newcomer Heather Rowles. The workload has increased with the junior soccer association business now attached to the ISA administration.

Thompson, 41, still playing

By Graham Cooke

At 41 and with two broken legs behind him, Peter Thompson is ready for yet another ACT Premiership season.

Now turning out in Burns Club colours, Thompson was one of the most lively players on the field as his team completed a 1-1 draw with Canberra Deakin in a Federation Cup game.

"We weren't that brilliant last season, but with the additions to the squad we made over the summer, we should do much better this time," he said.

Thompson, who has also played for Canberra Olympic, Tuggeranong United and Monaro in a senior career which stretches back more than 20 years, has broken both his legs, but each time made good on his promise to get back into the game.

"They're both standing up pretty well," he said. "All I'm wishing for myself is an injury-free and mistake-free season."

His coach at the Burns Club, former Canberra City player Steve Bryant, knows a thing or two about playing longevity — he became the oldest man to appear in a Federation Cup final when he turned out for Canberra City a couple of seasons ago at the age of 45.

Peter Thompson: Never too young.

Is Thompson likely to beat that record. "No way, he's still got four years to go," Bryant said.

"But if he does look like breaking it, I'll just drop him," he added with a smile.

Malaysians beat Cosmos

MALAYSIA 5
CANBERRA COSMOS 2

By Graham Cooke

An organised and better disciplined Malaysian National team beat the Canberra Cosmos 5-2 in a training match last Thursday (March 9) at the AIS field in Canberra.

Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni rested many of his NSL players who lost to Carlton just two days previously.

With a line up which included several ACTAS players, the friendly did little to dispell Sermanni's concerns. "Granted it was just a training game, granted some of the key squad members weren't on the park, but it still doesn't excuse the lack of focus and breakdown in concentration in the middle of the game."

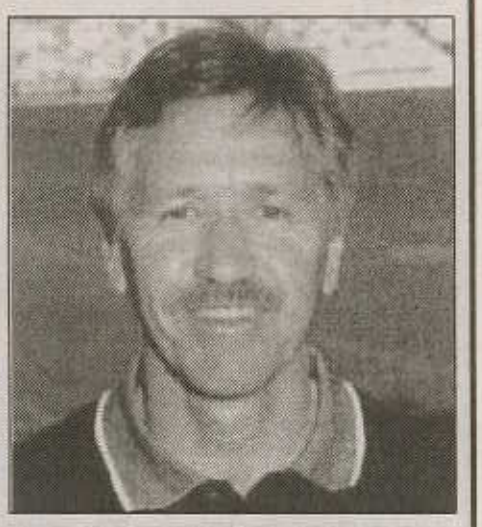
For nearly 40 minutes of the first half, the Cosmos took the initiative, buoyed by the smaller stature of their opposition. Both Harry James and Glen Kolpak had chances early but both shots went wide. Geoff Howarth had a goal disallowed for offside.

The Malaysians failed to weight their crosses and passes, finding the sidelines rather than the target. When they finally found their touch, it came as an avalanche.

Malaysia's Zami Mohamed Nor did most of the damage, scoring twice in four minutes just before half time. The first was a delightful chip over keeper Angelo Konstantinou's head and the second the easiest of tap-ins as he arrived to meet a low cross at the far post.

With only moments to go before the break, Niza Ruddin took full advantage of a poor corner clearance and blasted Malaysia's third.

Mohamed Nor completed his hat-trick early in the second half, but not before Howarth found Kolpak free in the centre. The Cosmos striker restored some confidence, this time burying his shot from close range. Later David Milin further reduced the margin, rising for an crisply headed goal from a lofted Howarth free kick.



Tom Sermanni: Rested players.

The dying seconds produced another for Malaysia, Rusdi Superman scoring in stoppage time.

The Malaysian National team was on a training tour last week in preparation for the upcoming Asian Games in April.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

LION TAUNTS - IN REPLY

Dear Sir,

In reply to recently published letters, most notably that of a certain Mr. Gavin Clarke (Vol.21 No.972), it is high time a few home truths were told as it seems like a task beyond the capabilities of the tabloid soccer journalists and even those from your esteemed magazine.

Firstly; "I saw the Lion pelted with cans and bottles by the Norths fans," states Mr. Clarke. No-one can or will condone any such action by Spirit fans, or any others, at this club. However, as an aside to the bigger issue, one must ask as to why this action was noticed but the mere fact that the Olympic fans had been doing this for most of the game to the visiting supporters, had verbally abused and threatened children, spat at the supporters or generally behaved in a manner likely to bring the name of their club into disrepute is neither here nor there. Selective memory?

But I digress. The Lion, or rather the person inside the costume, thought it a marvellous idea to stand in front of the 'away' supporters and as soon as 'his' side had scored a goal pull his tail between his legs and make a masturbating gesture to the visiting fans. Now perhaps I am not very bright but please place this type of action into any of the following categories:

A/ Stupid, B/ Moronic, C/ Pathetic, D/ Disgraceful, E/ Provocative, F/ Totally Ridiculous or G/ ALL of the above!

Mr. Taylor in the Sunday Telegraph Mirror, obviously taking his information from a source far removed from the events it would seem, suggests that Northern Spirit Football Club could do without this type of 'hooligan' element attached to the club. He would of course be right had the supporters not been provoked and had instigated the whole affair. This in no way condones the actions of one or two of them, merely a statement of what actually happened. Perhaps, and this applies to ANY journalist, had Mr. Taylor or any other soccer scribe bothered to contact this club to check their facts, gutter press reporting such as this would become a thing of the past. A case of 'never let the truth get in the way of a good story' is an old adage that springs to mind.

Mr. Clarke then suggests that 'Norths (supporters) you cheap skates!' for attending the $5 Hill area to one side of the ground. Perhaps if he had bothered to check with either club he would have found out the reason why.

I personally spoke to Mr. Clinton Marks at Sydney Olympic and suggested the use of the Railway End for Spirit fans and was told that this had been closed off and was not available and was offered the eventual area of the hill as the alternative. With little option, it was agreed and relayed to our supporters via E-mail and in the matchday programme of Friday, 18th February 2000 (Page 19 if anyone would like to check).

This is something that I do for ALL away matches, in conjunction with the Supporters Committee, including interstate, as some of our fans do actually travel and is a fact that can be readily checked by ringing the clubs in question. However, as with last season, arrangements made were NOT adhered to by the host club on this occasion.

It was stated that the gate between the larger covered area, opposite the Railway End, and the $5 Hill would have restricted access with no-one going either way as the Olympic fans, having been at the opposite end of the ground last year decided to confront the Spirit supporters in this area after half-time, once again having been told personally that steps would be taken to ensure that this would not happen. Sadly, whether an untenable situation or lip service having been paid to this matter is open to question.

In writing this, I once again spoke with Mr. Marks to confirm my FACTS, and would strongly urge ALL soccer scribes to start reporting on what really happens at matches instead of tarring certain supporters with the brush so deserved of others, and when questioned as to why I defend Northern Spirit supporters so vehemently on this matter the answer is simple, I give credit where it is due and will not sit idly by and watch the reputation of the best supporters in this country systematically tarnished and destroyed by ill-informed and the often spurious scribblings of the great misguided and/or those who wish to paint a distorted one-eyed picture for whatever means.

In closing, Northern Spirit FC, the directors, board nor myself will condone any form of 'hooligan' act (as described by some) and collectively and singularly have made this position clear on several occasions in the past and the ONLY time our supporters have made an error of judgment, as opposed to deliberately flaunting the rules, was at Edensor Park last season when they changed ends at half-time which could have been considered as a 'provocative' act. The supporters learned from this mistake but the question remains as to when will others put their hands up and state that it is they who have a problem and address it accordingly? What is the saying about people in glass houses?

Some will be quick to point to the events at Brandon Park last season but once again it would be far easier to tarnish the supporters rather than address the actual events on their merit (or to their discredit in this instance), and having been present with the supporters when these occurrences took place can state that they were not provoked by the Spirit fans in any way, shape or form. Still, it's always easier to point the stick at the usually silent majority rather than report the true facts isn't it.

Let's take a look at another fact. Sydney Olympic, playing some beautiful football this season by the way, proudly sit atop the table and have attracted an average crowd of 6,244 this season. Compare that to Northern Spirit who, to be fair, have played some horror matches this term, have an average crowd of some 9,406 when sitting in 12th place at time of writing. Almost 50% more than the league leaders. Now this tells me several things and probably the most important is the fact that the club appeals to the greater public. Strange that our 'hooligan element' doesn't turn people away then?

In closing, club Chairman Mr. Remo Nogarotto was in attendance during this unseemly affair. I was actually on the bench for this game as the team manager as opposed to my usual preference of the terraces, and assisted the security staff and police in ushering Spirit fans into the Railway End that had previously been off limits?

Praise is forthcoming to the security staff and police personnel who managed to contain an extremely volatile situation with a calm and reasoned manner. Well done. The problem arises when instructions are actively sought and adhered to by one party (Northern Spirit) but are, seemingly, disregarded by others.

Yours in football

Micky Brock
Membership/Supporter Liaison Manager
Northern Spirit Football Club

Micky, although a one-eyed Spirit supporter as you are it is nice to see that you are giving credit where it is due i.e. police personnel etc...I must say that it certainly does annoy me somewhat when any reporting is done without a complete check of all the facts.

Now I wasn't at the infamous game in question but I'm wishing I was so my opinion could be a personal one as opposed to a second hand one. I would like to think that the mainstream media would be slightly more thorough but it seems on the basis of your comments that as usual, important facts are conveniently omitted.

Perhaps people should peruse ALL the facts before speaking otherwise keep their opinions to themselves.

I cant want for the soccer fraternity in this country to start keeping their eyes and minds on the most important thing of all...the pitch - and not what happens off it! - Ed.

FOOTBALL IS WHAT MATTERS

Dear Sir,

Let's really set the record straight Mr Clarke. The radio programme to which you refer is "The Charlie Dempsey Experience" on 98.5FM every Sunday evening from 10pm - 11pm.

The show is not run by clowns but by dedicated football fans, some of whom are Northern Spirit fans from the NSFC Supporter's Committee, all of whom do it for free, and is most definitely not run by the Northern Spirit Football Club.

The programme is hosted on alternative weeks by myself and John McCormack. The previous Host of the show was unable to find fans from any other club who were willing to put in the effort required to do the show on a weekly basis, even during the long off season. I can assure you Mr Clarke that none of the Hosts nor the "Guest" panelists are as you say "Cockney".

In fact the three panelists on the show that you referred to were of Dutch, Macedonian, and Scottish extraction, all somewhat distant from East London!

On the infamous "Lion Incident" I will say this, perhaps it's high time that somebody looked into the behaviour of the Sydney Olympic mascot.

Parading in front of highly emotional opposition fans baring it's bottom and giving them the finger are not the actions of someone trying to make friends! No wonder the poor lion was showered in whatever came to hand given it's highly provocative actions, and not spat upon as John Taylor mentioned in a highly innaccurate report in his Sunday column.

If I recall correctly Barney the Bear was banned by Rugby League authorities several years ago from North Sydney Oval for similar behaviour.

Having listened to the show you referred to I can assure you that the panelists only ever claimed that "a flare was thrown in the second half" not the three you referred to in your dream. In any case whether it be one or 200 flares is irrelevant, it's quite simple really — THEY ARE BANNED —those who rip them at games only give the majority of that team's fans an undeserved reputation — GROW UP!

As to being moved by the Police 30 minutes into the first half of the match, I'm sorry Mr Clarke it was the Police's decision to move the fans into the "Railway End" terrace not the Northern Spirit Fan's decision. This after the majority of fans had been in the area

they were requested to be in from 4pm onwards only to be moved some three hours later by the Police. If the area at the "Railway End" has been "noted as a danger area by Canterbury Council" as you claim, why has it been open to fans for every other Olympic home game except the recent South Melbourne match?

As for the Northern Spirit fans being cheapskates, perhaps 25% of them should be called "uninformed" as they paid the $15 full price at the other gates and were then directed to the "$5 Hill"!

Why is it that the Northern Spirit fans, after consultations well in advance with the other Sydney clubs, have never had any problems going to Marconi (all three times, this season and last), Sydney United (this season at least, changing ends at Edensor in the first season was a big mistake which has NEVER been repeated), and Parramatta Power? However on both occasions we have been to Belmore there have been, largely avoidable, dramas.

I would suggest there may be some communication problems somewhere and perhaps a meeting between the two parties should take place so that the air can be cleared and we can both move forward and start talking about the thing that really matters - THE FOOTBALL!!

Finally Mr Clarke I extend an offer to you to appear one Sunday evening as a guest panelist on "The Charlie Dempsey Experience" we, and the public at large, would love to hear your opinions on the state of the NSL. Just drop us a message with your contact details on http://step-toe.homestead.com .

A Bross
North Sydney, NSW

This whole 'lion mascot saga' is definitely one that should be discussed and resolved quickly. As you say, the Football is what matters. I hope your offers are taken up. - Ed.

I'M NO CLOWN - IN REPLY

Dear Sir,

I would like to reply to one of your readers' "Letters to the editor" of last week. He claims he was one of the presenters on the Northern Spirit radio show I referred to in my letter to ABSW of 29 February 2000 and seemed a little bit miffed that I called him and his colleagues clowns.

He also appears confused about the meanings of the words "ethics" and "truth".

Olympic management seemed to have given you permission to locate yourselves (Norths fans) on the Hill. If you boys had a brain, you would not have stood on the benches along the fence but instead have stood on top of the hill on half-way. What time you arrived makes no difference. Your selfish actions antagonised the Olympic fans whose view of the pitch you were obstructing.

On your question of our crowd figures, our bean counters do not include children, complimentary passes, season ticket holders or sponsors. This explains our seemingly low attendance figures. Belmore has an official capacity of 27,000. Where were the other 20,000 fans going to sit on the night?

Olympic fans are always well-behaved. There will always be potential trouble when the arrogance of travelling fans like Norths outweighs logical thought, courtesy, and consideration for the host fans.

Lastly, this radio show in the past has placed racial slurs on clubs such as Olympic and Sydney United. These slurs have been in the form of someone impersonating a man from a souvlaki van at Belmore and also someone impersonating Sydney United Chairman, Marko Franovic. All this happens on community radio, an institution that is supposed to be very politically correct (yes, keen on ethics and truth).

I met one of the presenters at the Channel Seven protest last week. He was absent from the radio show on the night in question, however I can give you his name as I have much respect for him.

He is known as AB and said to our assembled group (don't go chasing your solicitors just yet) that one of the presenters on the night was very drunk. Well, well, well. This must be why you saw three flares instead of one and why you were so aggresive towards our cute mascot.

I therefore implore all fans to lodge complaints to the Australian Broadcasting Tribunal/Authority as I have. I can't wait for the Monday morning papers for my weekend results.

Gavin Clarke
Bass Hill, NSW

Some serious allegations Gavin. Let's hope all the issues can be resolved without damage to the game.

I suggest you take up the offer extended to you on this page under 'Football is what Matters'.

This way we can all see that all of the people involved in this saga truly want to see the GAME progress and not their egos.

I will happily liaise to see this matter resolved amicably. -Ed.

ARNOLD SHOULD GO

Dear Sir,

I read with great interest in Saturday's Telegraph, where Graeme Arnold states that he does not know what more to do after the 3-0 defeat to Wollongong. If he doesnt know what to do, why doesnt he resign since the team is getting worse.

Somebody needs to take responsibility for the poor performances. He also says he has no comment to make on Nicola Berti. Mate, he should be cleaning Nicola Berti's boots. What's Graeme Arnold achieved - NOTHING!

Here he has a player whose credentials speak for themselves. He has said from day one that he is not fit, so what's the problems? If he cant do a job for the team now, dont play him. Wait till he gets fit.

I feel the management of Northern Spirit should make a decision. We all know what's going to happen, at the end of the year Graeme Arnold is going to say, he wants to focus on the national team and therefore unable to continue as coach with Northern Spirit. Why not bring in a person who can start looking at players now for next year because this season is gone for Northern Spirit.

Once again such a great club, trying to do the right thing for soccer, deserve better. Arnold should walk.

Fasiel Munas
Eastwood. NSW.

Big words. Let's wait and see if come season's end you are right. I will be interested to see what happens. - Ed.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

CANBERRA COSMOS 0
CARLTON SC 2

By Graham Cooke

Throughout his coaching career Tom Sermanni has rarely been short of ideas. When his teams were playing badly, he was always ready with a plan to correct the problem; when they were playing well, a blueprint to improve even further.

Tom Sermanni: No answers.

But with the current Canberra Cosmos team, he is close to admitting defeat.

"I really do not know the answer," he said, shaking his head sadly at the post-match press conference after the 2-0 loss to Carlton.

He identified the problem weeks ago: glaring lapses in concentration which have turned promising situations into mountains; a goal or two conceded in moments of madness; wrong options taken; points thrown away.

It happened again in this game.

The Cosmos were performing reasonably well against tough opponents until, with just six minutes left before the interval, Carlton's Andrew Marth chipped a hopeful ball towards Alex Moreira in what appeared to be a well defended position.

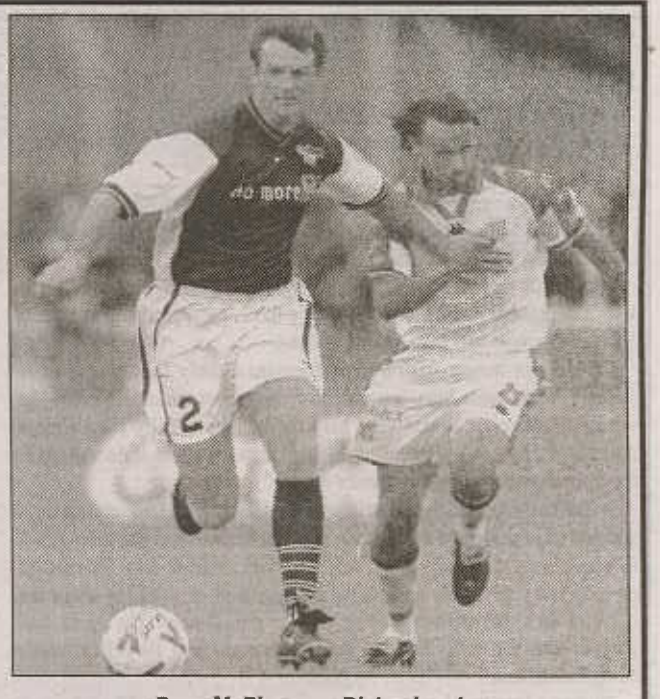
Yet not only did Moreira break clear of a hesitant defence, he had time enough to draw goalkeeper Grant Barlow, then slide the ball into an undefended net.

Three minutes later the game was as good as over. After Barlow had pushed a stinging shot from Mike Conroy round the post, Lubo Lapsansky sent over a harmless looking corner kick that was swinging well away from goal.

But no-one picked up Dave McPherson, powering in from midfield, who met the ball with a diving header, slamming it back past Barlow.

The Cosmos might have given themselves a chance in first half stoppage time when Paul Roberts headed Daniel Watkins through, but with a good sight at goal the striker put the ball well over the bar.

That gave Carlton coach Stuart Munro the half-time opportunity to reorganise his men around defending the lead, and from then on the Cosmos rarely got within sight of goal.



Dave McPherson: Diving header.

Munro said afterwards this result marked "the turning of the corner" for Carlton after a series of poor results.

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2
MARCONI STALLIONS 1

By Daniel Giorelando

The miserable run of the Marconi Stallions at North Sydney Oval continued last Friday night as poor finishing and two gifted goals to the Northern Spirit handed the home side a 2-1 victory.

The wet and slippery conditions didn't help the Stallions but the way in which they conceded both goals can not be blamed on the weather and must be a worry for coach Eddie Krncevic.

In a game which had all the passion and controversy of a local derby, the Spirit started like a house on fire, taking the lead inside the first 10 minutes.

The home side were handed the first of their two goals after only seven minutes by Marconi defender Mark Babic who deflected a Matthew Langdon shot into his own net.

Marconi keeper Michael Turnbull was left flat-footed as Langdon's 25-metre shot was seemingly travelling wide, before the untimely deflection of Babic.

The goal was deserved by the Spirit who were unlucky not to take the lead three minutes earlier as Nicola Berti, who played his best game for the club to date, chipped keeper Turnbull only to see his shot skim off the crossbar.

Marconi responded by lifting the tempo of the match with defender Chad Gibson leading the way for the Stallions.

The 23-year-old came centimetres away from levelling the scores in the 13th minute after a scorching 25-metre drive skimmed the crossbar.

And on 29 minutes, Marconi appeared to have levelled the scores as Mark Babic made up for his earlier mistake, by tapping the ball past Henderson after a goal mouth scramble, only for referee Matthew Breeze to disallow the effort.

However the match turned within the five minutes leading up to the break as Marconi striker Francis Awaritefe missed two golden chances before a defensive error allowed Spirit to score what proved to be the match winner.

Once again left-sided winger Matthew Langdon was involved as his ball set striker Tony Perinich free on goal only to be brought down by Buddy Farah.

The unnecessary tackle gave David Seal the chance to score his seventh of the season, which he did after calmly converting from the spot.

Spirit went into the break up 2-0 but it could easily have been a different story had it not been for some poor finishing by Awaritefe.

The lanky striker set off Marconi's five minutes of pain by squandering an easy chance as keeper Paul Henderson rushed off his line to block the striker's shot after turning Spirit defender Paul Bilokapic inside out.

Matthew Langdon: Man of the Match.

And Spirit, not content about escaping that opportunity presented Awaritefe yet another chance as sweeper Robbie Enes misdirected a backpass but once again Awaritefe missed the chance as his shot trickled inches past the left-hand post.

Marconi clearly dominated play after the opening Spirit onslaught and despite the disappointing loss, coach Eddie Krncevic commended his team for the effort and commitment in trying conditions.

"We had a couple of clear cut chances which fell to Awaritefe and we didn't take them.

"I'm a bit disappointed but I am proud of how my boys played. It was a pity they didn't come away with anything today," said Krncevic.

Spirit somehow managed to hold on. The team's performance on the night was full of commitment and heart not seen regularly enough this season as coach Graham Arnold explained.

"They haven't put that effort in every week, otherwise we wouldn't be in the situation that we are in.

"What is disappointing is that they seem to do it now and then. We seem to rise for Marconi," said Arnold.

But the story of Northern Spirit this season has been that somehow they discover ways of losing matches and this was no different as Paul Bilokapic was given his marching orders 12 minutes from time after a crude challenge on Danny Invincibile.

However, Invincibile was to get his revenge five minutes later by pulling a goal back for the visitors after heading in a Frank Duric cross. The goal was Marconi's first at North Sydney Oval in four outings at the ground.

Stallions defender Dominic Longo was given a golden chance of stealing a vital point with the last touch of the match, four minutes into stoppage time, although he sprayed his header over the bar.

The win kept Spirit's flickering finals flame burning for another week as their Sydney neighbours have now picked up only one point in their last three games, although Marconi will get another chance at revenge as the two sides meet for the fourth time this season in round 28.

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 0
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 1

By Greg Danvers

Not only did the Melbourne Knights look like the Newcastle Breakers they played like them and won 1-0 at Breakers Stadium last Friday night.

Just like a couple of other visiting teams this season to Birmingham Gardens the visitors didn't bring an away strip so the sportsman like Breakers loaned the Knights their youth away strip and then coach Vlado Vanis stole Lee Sterrey's game plan and put up a Herculean back fence and were snappy on the break.

Great exposure for the local media sponsors NBN television and radio NEWFM, both sleeve sponsors of the Breakers with the match beamed through cyberspace on pay TV but it was always going to be a side in a Breakers shirt to collect the points.

For the Novocastrians it turned out to be the wrong side but from the football side of things the Knights took there chance on goal, albeit with the slightest of a deflection off the forehead of Breakers midfielder Mark Wilson, and flew back south with the three points.

The Breakers had twice as many chances in the first half to nail a goal but failed at the last hurdle, sounds so familiar.

Knights Mark Silic created havoc for the Breakers defenders early in the match when he had chances in the 15th and 25th minutes but it was John Buonavoglia, for the Breakers, who had the most of the chances but in an unusually off night was wide of the mark on at least three attempts.

Breakers speedster Andy Roberts had a great chance on the stroke of half-time from a Brad Wieczorek cross but was also wide of goal.

Precious little momentum was allowed in the opening stanza as referee Brian Precious almost blew the pea out of his whistle.

The Breakers pride themselves on establishing the upper hand in the first 20 minutes but this was thwarted not only by whistle blower but a lack of enthusiasm from the home side.

"We were determined to go out there and stick one away in the first 20 minutes and bury them," Breakers captain Shane Pryce said.

"That was our plan and it didn't work out that way maybe the stop start attributed to that."

Knights 'keeper Martin John earnt his winning bonus tipping a Wilson shot, from the edge of the box, over the bar four minutes after the break and again almost 20 minutes later when Glenn Sprod let one rip from 30 yards out.

Vanis injected striker Slvako Rados into the match almost immediately for Silic in what was a match winning decision. Rados curled a wicked corner in off the forehead of Wilson six minutes later which had a very lack lustre Breakers on the canvas.

"At the end of the day we got punished from one corner," Breakers coach Lee Sterrey said.

"In the first half we were threatening to open ourselves up a bit too on the break, they nearly caught us on the break a couple of times.

"We're used to playing that game but they did it to us.

"I was disappointed with the overall enthusiasm and strength that we showed it wasn't the Newcastle side I've been coaching the last 18 months."

As always the effervescent Andy Harper was not going to lie down and worked overtime to create something from nothing but his exuberance became too much and was red carded in the 89th minute.

Harper was having a running battle with the whole Knights side and crudely brought down by Rados and retaliated with a swinging forearm that went unchecked and probably un-noticed by Precious. Fourth official Matthew Ross saw the incident and from a sideline report to Precious, 'Harps' was the first into the showers.

"The same bloke (Ross) has sat in the seat at a number of games over the last 18 months and must have known it was a TV game," fumed Sterrey on Harper's send off.

"He has been here a number of times when there's been things go on in back play and that's what upsets me he only reports one thing in 18 months.

"You can't report one thing at one game in over 18 months and say you're doing an honest job, simple as that."

For visiting coach Vlado Vanis the flight home would have been enjoyable given the shellacking South Melbourne gave them five days earlier.

"We definitely played their game. We were waiting and they tried to take us out but I was yelling from the bench all the time to keep the shape and take them on the break," Melbourne Knights coach Vlado Vanis said.

"But one lucky corner — one goal — three points on a very hard ground to win."

To make the National Soccer League finals coaches will tell you they need to win at least 50 per-cent of home matches.

After the loss to the Knights the Breakers home win percentage sits on the 50 per-cent mark.

Mark Wilson: Unfortunate own goal.

The Breakers have played 13 home matches winning seven, drawing four and losing only two scoring 24 and conceding 16 goals.

Home matches against Canberra, Parramatta, Carlton and South Melbourne await the Breakers in the next nine rounds and they must win at least two to remain on track as they strive for a first ever finals series berth.

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

PERTH GLORY 2
PARRAMATTA POWER 1

By Richard Kreider

Perth Glory moved a step closer to ensuring their involvement in the top-six playoffs following a gutsy 2-1 triumph over an unlucky Parramatta Power at Perth Oval last Sunday.

The Perth side had to battle hard for their 13th win of the season which kept them in third position on the table, one point behind leaders Sydney Olympic and with a game in hand.

"I was not happy with our performance, only the result," said Stange. "Parramatta have a number of dangerous strikers that use the wings effectively. It was very hard for us. We usually play a more direct style, but today I changed my tactics to a waiting style and made the offensive moves on the counter-attack," Stange said.

It did however, prove a costly win for Glory with four of Sunday's side out of next week's away game with Melbourne Knights after a rash of cards were handed out by referee Mark Shield, who seemed to employ the ready, fire, aim philosophy, instead of thinking about the relevant incidents before handing out the punishment. The game was played hard but never spiteful despite two red and 10 yellow cards being dished out.

"It was a very tough game for a young referee to control," said coach Bernd Stange. "Both myself and Dave (Mitchell) agreed not not to criticise the referee who is one of the talents in the country but we thought he was very quick with the cards, when other officials would show a little patience," Stange said.

Glory were already missing a number of key players for this game, Con Boutisianis was absent for disciplinary reasons, Naven's wife gave birth to a baby girl overnight and Miller was injured for the first time in his 104 games with the club. On the plus side, Bobby Despotovski was on the bench after a seven-week layoff.

Parramatta also had their selection problems with new Socceroo sensation Steve Laybutt missing the trip west after hurting his back at mid-week training and Milan Blagojevic was not match-fit.

After a scrappy start, Glory broke through with the opening goal after 18 minutes when a high looping corner from Troy Halpin was stabbed home at the back post by Aurelio Schwertz after goalkeeper Mike Gibson failed to intercept. Power coach Dave Mitchell later claimed Gibson had been impeded.

Steve Berry should have equalised six minutes later when he headed a Dave Barrett cross centimetres past Jason Petkovic's right-hand upright from the six-yard line.

The visitors had the only other chance on goal for the first-half in the 41st minute when Mile Sterjovski had a close-range snap-shot well saved by Petkovic.

After Joel Griffiths headed a Sterjovski centre just wide in the 54th minute, Aurelio replied at the other end moments later with a low strike that whistled past a post.

The goal of the match came in the 64th minute when right wing-back Rob Trajkovski finished off a slick one-two with Troy Halpin before releasing a waist-high missile from 20 metres that bulged the far reaches of the net and understandably produced a roar of delight from the 11,737 crowd. Ironically, both goalscorers, Aurelio and Trajkovski, scored their Glory debut goals last week against Brisbane Strikers.

Some poor defensive play from Glory gave Sterjovski a golden chance to reduce the deficit six minutes later, but his ground level snap-shot was sensationally parried away by Petkovic for a corner.

The home side suffered a set-back two minutes later when Halpin was red-carded for verbal dissent. Bernd Stange was visibly upset by Halpin's actions and gave him both barrells as the midfielder trudged off to the change-rooms.

With the one-man advantage, Power pulled a goal back seven minutes before time when Bennett picked out substitute Walter Ardone from a right-side centre, who had no problem in beating Petkovic from close-range.

Five minutes later, it was Parramatta's turn to lose a player, when Mark Byrnes collected a second yellow card following what looked like an accidental clash with Petkovic.

Rob Trajkovski: Goal of the match.

With the advantage lost, Glory were able to hang on to claim the three points, and leave Power pondering over the missed chances and more importnaly their play-off aspirations for the season.

"It will be tough but I still think we've got a chance, especially if the boys played like they did today," said Mitchell.

SYDNEY UNITED 1
CANBERRA COSMOS 1

By Vince Battiato

In a match that never reached any great heights Sydney United squandered what certainly should have been three points at home against the Canberra Cosmos.

A disallowed goal, a missed penalty and a host of bad misses forced United to share the points against a lacklustre Cosmos side.

United should have been ahead after just 90 seconds when Aytec Genc released Nahuel Arrarte down the left. Genc's early cross was met in the six-yard box by Nick Bosevski, who should have at least hit the target with his free header.

United dominated the first half but as has been the story of their season so far, went into the break with nothing to show for all their toiling.

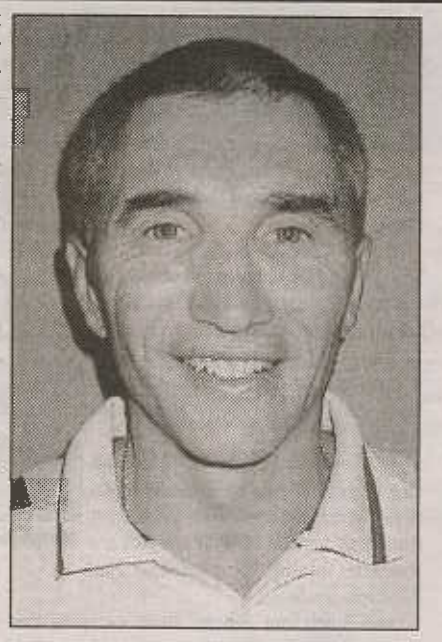
With Genc and Arrarte pulling the strings in midfield the home side looked destined to hit the front before half-time.

Bosevski again had a chance to put United in front in the 36th minute after a slicing through ball by Vince Savocca set him on his way. But Bosevski was thwarted by a great save by the Canberra custodian Grant Barlow down to his right.

Bosevski then went one better four minutes later following up a shot by Andy Rakic. Barlow had parried the shot and an opportunist Bosevski planted the ball into an unguarded net much to the crowd's pleasure.

To their disgust the linesman's flag meant the match remained scoreless.

After a dismal first-half performance whatever Cosmos coach Tom Sermanni said at the break worked because Canberra came out a new side and it took them only eight minutes to hit the front.



Ivan Petkovic: Happy Overall.

Danny Burt clipped a short ball over the flat-footed United defence. Jason Polak controlled and slotted easily past Brett Hughes to give Canberra the lead in a move that looked dubiously offside.

But United hit back just six minutes later earning a deserved penalty when man of the match Genc was brought down in the box.

To United's dismay Eddy Bosnar hit his spot-kick straight at the keeper.

With United coach Ivan Petkovic throwing men forward in the dying minutes the game came alive as a spectacle with the Sydneysiders looking for at least the point they deserved.

And it came with just a minute remaining when Genc broke away down the left. His early pin-point cross was met by sub Mario Jerman who gave Barlow no chance with a powerful header from inside six yards.

Canberra coach Sermanni was not happy with the match:

"These are games we've got to win, but I guess a point is a point.

"It would have been a disaster had we lost here today." he said.

United coach Petkovic was a little more optimistic.

"Overall I'm happy," he said.

"It's the first time we've come back in the last 20 minutes of a game.

"I think we deserved more than a draw, but I'm happy with the way the boys played."

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0

By John Economos

John Perosh on loan till the end of this season from the Northern Spirit, not only made a spectacular debut for his new team but saved the League leaders Sydney Olympic from certain defeat last Sunday night at the Belmore Sports Ground against a gallant Gippsland Falcons.

Perosh pulled off no less than three life-saving blocks that ultimately allowed Olympic to struggle to a 1-0 win over the lads from the Latrobe Valley.

Olympic's win allowed them to retain the lead on the League table and whilst sweet, simultaneously brought them a very sour note as their mercurial playmaker Gabriel ('Chi Chi') Mendez broke down late in the first half. Mendez was unable to continue after the break and it's now feared that the star midfielder will have to undergo a fourth knee operation since 1993.

Stylish Olympic striker Pablo Cardozo scored the sole goal in the 21st minute when he intelligently deflected into the target a magic flat square ball fired in from the right by blockbusting right midfielder Brett Emerton.

Emerton again gave a fine display with his block-busting raids down both flanks and occasionally through the middle whilst releasing team-mates into attack.

Despite Emerton's excellent display, it was Olympic's new on-loan goalkeeper Perosh that stole the show by executing three lightening saves to deny Gippsland certain goals.

As early as in the 19th minute Perosh sprang into action by denying Gippsland's striker Igor Mandic and five minutes from 'drinks' midfielder Clayton Bell suffered the same fate when he cracked a 25 metre rocket on target that Perosh turned around the base of the right upright.

Gippsland's coach Jeff Hopkins tried to catch Olympic off guard by lining up with a three-four-three attacking formation with Brian MacNicol, Igor Mandic and Robbie Puca striking.

Whilst Hopkins used a sweeper in former World Cup player MehmedDurakovic to cover his stoppers, Olympic's Branko Culina in cavalier style dispensed with a free back, electing to use his captain Peter Tsekenis making his comeback after 17 weeks, as a 'screener' infront of twin markers Scott Baillie and Chris Zoricich.

The second session saw a great revival by Gippsland who strongly hit back by tightening up their lines as well as creating more scoring chances.

Striker Robbie Puca in the 73rd flashed clear into Olympic's box but the electric Perosh again saved well from point-blank range.

Once Olympic lost their playmaker Mendez at halftime the side lacked direction as Gippsland's midfield asserted its authority and had Olympic under pressure.

Whilst coach Branko Culina was coy in denying the rumour circling the team on Sunday night, it was being banded around that Sydney United's mobile right flanker Tommy Pondeljak could be under Olympic's microscope.

Best performers for Olympic were Perosh, Emerton and central marker Scott Baillie whilst the Gippsland's best were twin defenders Dean Fak and Manny Gotis, sweeper Mehmed Durakovic plus midfielders Brian MacNicol and Clayton Bell.

An understandably disappointed Gippsland coach and former Welsh international Jeff Hopkins, stated: "Perosh was solid tonight and it was he that kept them in the game. I wasn't happy in the first half as we gave them too much space. We should have put away the two or three chances that we did create.

"We haven't got points because we haven't been clinical in front of goal. In the second half I thought we had the better of the game. Dean Fak has been very consistent for us as has Mehmed (sweeper Durakovic). I've watched Olympic play and I knew they're a good side but I expected a result for us. I was very disappointed with our first half," ended Hopkins.

Meanwhile Olympic's coach Branko Culina reflected: " I was happy with the three points but that's about all. After tonight we lose Emerton for three weeks (on national duty) and Mendez for the rest of the season (knee operation). It's sad for the Club as no team is good enough not to miss Emerton.

"This is the first time in the Club's history that we have won both matches against Gippsland. I was delighted with the debut made by Perosh and Tsekenis did well but needs games for sharpness after being out of action for 17 weeks. "We scored and they (Gippsland) lifted their game. We didn't play well but we won," Culina ended.

TURN TO PAGE 32 FOR MATCH STATISTICS

NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE

CARLTON SC 1
BRISBANE STRIKERS 0

By Bert van Bedaf

Michael Schumacher grabbed Grand Prix headlines, but Carlton took a small prize of its own. It climbed to fifth place on the NSL ladder, beating Brisbane Strikers 1-0 in 29 degree heat at Olympic Park last Sunday night.

The vital break-through arrived in the 82nd minute. Carlton defender David McPherson found the net on the volley after captain Andrew Marth had headed on McPherson's first attempt, also a header that hung in the air unchallenged.

The win assured Carlton jumped over Marconi, claiming fifth spot on goal average, while the Strikers are still looking for a top six berth.

The Blues also scored their lowest attendance for the season. Perhaps fine weather, Moomba and the Grand Prix conspired against a better crowd, but only 1402 spectators bothered to turn up, about 300 less than Carlton's second lowest home attendance a fortnight ago.

Carlton assistant coach Fab Incantalupo was in charge in the absence of senior coach Stuart Munro who fell ill and shortly before kick-off went home on doctor's advice. It was Incantalupo's debut as caretaker and it could not have been a more auspicious start.

"It was an experience and I'll cherish it. It was great to get a game (as senior coach) and get a win. It was an even contest, but we took our opportunity. We've got three points and moved to fifth place. That's what we got out of this game," Incantalupo said.

Brisbane coach John Kosmina believed his side was unlucky to suffer a loss.

"Carlton's not the team they were earlier in the season. We were dead unlucky. Maybe we could have defended just a little better. Considering Carlton's level of experience, we did exceptionally well. But we can turn it around. We've got nine games left," Kosmina said, still confident a finals place was there for the taking.

Stuart Munro: Fell ill before kick-off and went home on doctor's orders.

The Blues went into attack from the kick-off and created early chances.

Brisbane was lucky not to concede a penalty when John McKain appeared to foul Carlton striker Alex Moreira inside the box after only 37 seconds. But referee Simon Micallef waved play on.

Brisbane escaped a second time, when luckless Carlton striker Mike Conroy hit the top of the crossbar after 11 minutes.

Archie Thompson stole the ball from Shane Steffanutto. Moreira had a shot, which Strikers 'keeper Clint Bolton blocked. Conroy, who is yet to score this season, chipped the ball onto the bar.

After a scoreless first half, Chay Hews fired a long-range shot for the Strikers that went well wide of the post without forcing Carlton 'keeper Dean Anastasiadis to save.

It did suggest the Strikers were ready to chance their luck in attack, while the Blues continued to search for their elusive breakthrough.

Wayne Srhoj provided a throughball after 50 minutes, but Jade North's cross was cut out by Carlton defender David McPherson. North momentarily troubled Anastasiadis on the hour, but the Carlton defence cleared for a corner that was quickly dispatched for a counter attack.

Marth saw his booming shot punched back into play by Bolton after 70 minutes to be denied a real chance from an angle. But there were no strikers in sight to follow through on the rebound.

McPherson's strike brought relief to the Carlton side. It lifted their play and they created several more chances. But McPherson's single goal proved sufficient to secure victory over the disappointed Strikers.

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 5
AUCKLAND KINGZ 1

By Otto Bader

A game of two halves on Sunday night at Brandon Park, the visitors one up at the break frustrating the home side. Wolves keeper Les Pogliacomi was injured shortly before making a good move to catch a corner cross.

From a free kick in the 29th minute the ball was headed into the Wolves goal area, the keeper watching it hit the upright, unable to react due to back injury, the defender not clearing the ball and leaving it for a simple tap-in for the Kingz Che Bunce, who could hardly miss from there.

Before that the Wolves had plenty of opportunities with Matt Horsley winning possession and sending Scott Chipperfield away, stopped by a terrific tackle Saso Petrovski also broke free but missed the target.

One had the feeling the Wolves would eventually score, even though being down by one goal. The Kingz had another good chance before the break in the 43rd minute hitting the upright.

In the second half the Wolves were patient and the goals came rolling in to the delight of coach Nick Theodorakopoulos. Right from the kick-off the Wolves pressured the Kingz in giving a corner away.

The equalizer came in the 48th minute when midfielder Dino Mennillo hit a top shot low and hard into the net after captain Matt Horsley laid the ball off, doing the hard yards. Scott Chipperfield could only being stopped through foul play and the Wolves started to push the ball around well, allowing the visitors the occasional break when they did look dangerous.

The second goal came after Horsley won a corner and the ball bounced around in the area, eventual falling for Paul Reid, the youngster hitting a top shot with his left for 2-1.

The Wolves got another in the 60th minute through sheer persistency on captain Matt Horsley's part who never gave up chasing the ball and forced the defender into a mistake, rounding the keeper and placing the ball into net.

Wolves David Huxley was injured in the 65th minute and was eventually replaced by Noel Spencer with George Souris coming on for David Cervinski who received a slight knock after doing a top job in defence.

The Kingz had one man sent off after a second yellow card offence and had to play with 10 men once again for the remaining 20 minutes. The Wolves scored again in the 85th minute when Stuart Young found the net after Horsley set him up, winning possession and Young making no mistake placing the ball into the net for 4-1.

The Kingz substituted David Moya for Wynton Rufer who played well, showing experience and technique, always looking dangerous on the ball. The Wolves changed Stuart Young in the 85th minute for Ben Blake who scored with his first touch when he reached a high ball and headed it into the net for a 5-1 victory in in the 92nd minute.

Wollongong coach Nick Theodorakopolous was ecstatic afterwards with the win, admitting in the first half at times the Wolves were outplayed for about 15 minutes but did work hard to maintain momentum.

The team did not panic even when they fell behind, not trying too hard to score straight away. He said his boys showed character and it is now his task to maintain the high standard of play. Shane Rufer, assistant coach of the Kingz was rather calm about the game and result, admitting they were defeated by a better team and is now looking forward to improve in the following games.

The Wolves will have striker Esala Masi and midfielder Neil Harlock back in training this week.

Matt Horsley: Ran Riot.

ABSW PLAYER OF THE YEAR

ROUND 25

Newcastle v Knights
3-J. Rajher (MK)
2-G. Sprod (NB)
1-M. Silic (MK)

Perth v Parramatta
3-E. Junior (PG)
2-S. Berry (PP)
1-D. Valle (PG)

Olympic v Gippsland
3-J. Perosh (SO)
2-B. Emerton (SO)
1-D. Fak (GF)

Wollongong v Auckland
3-M. Horsley (WW)
2-D. Cervinski (WW)
1-M. Stergiopoulos (AK)

Northern Spirit v Marconi
3-M. Langdon (NS)
2-C. Gibson (MS)
1-P. Henderson (NS)

Sydney United v Canberra Cosmos
3-A. Genc (SU)
2-C. Barlow (CC)
1-N. Bosevski (SU)

Carlton v Brisbane
3-J. North (BS)
2-D. McPherson (C)
1-A. Marth (C)

PROGRESSIVE POINTS
AFTER ROUND 25

David Cervinski	(Wollongong Wolves)	28
Andy Harper	(Newcastle Breakers)	25
Pablo Cardozo	(Sydney Olympic)	24
Angelo Costanzo	(Adelaide City Force)	21
Michael Curcija	(South Melbourne)	18
John Buonavoglia	(Newcastle Breakers)	18
Mehmed Durakovic	(Gippsland Falcons)	18
Con Boutsianis	(Perth Glory)	18
Lubo Lapsansky	(Carlton SC)	16
Andrew Crews	(Parramatta Power)	14
Gabriel Mendez	(Sydney Olympic)	14
Gareth Naven	(Perth Glory)	14
Aurelio Vidmar	(Adelaide City)	14
Matt Horsley	(Wollongong Wolves)	14

TURN TO PAGE 32 FOR MATCH STATISTICS

Eat Well Live Well Premier League

eat well live well

DIABETES AUSTRALIA Victoria

VicHealth

★★ ROUND SIX WRAP ★★

By Bert van Bedaf

Three matches were played on the weekend and only the Saints managed a win.

Oakleigh and Port Melbourne fought out a 3-3 draw, while Altona Magic came from behind twice to level with Fawkner, 2-2.

Three more matches were being played yesterday, Labor Day, a public holiday in Victoria. Bulleen took on Bentleigh Greens, where former Zebras coach, Gary Cole was in charge for his first match.

Heidelberg United hosted Altona East, under new coach Jeff Olver, while the Melbourne Raiders faced league powerhouse Green Gully at Epping stadium.

Churchill Reserve has been a graveyard for many clubs, and home team St Albans made no exception for the Preston Lions.

The Saints (or should that be the Undertakers) downed the Lions 2-0 with a goal in each half last Sunday.

Captain Kon Sianidis headed home the opening goal in the 32nd minute from a corner, although Mijo Trupkovic may have had a touch on the line.

When Trupkovic, at the Saints from the Melbourne Knights, was fouled outside the box in the 76th minute, Damien Vojtek, another former Knight, struck a well-taken free-kick from 25 metres for the Saints' second goal.

Preston pressed to get back into the match and Alex Josifovski, a former Carlton player, had his chance, but Saint's keeper Marijan Vunderl made several excellent saves to deny the Lions.

LEAGUE SEES FIRST SACKINGS

By Bert van Bedaf

After only five rounds the first coaches have tumbled. Without little ado, Harry Chalkitis was relieved of his duties and replaced with Gary Cole at Bentleigh Greens, while at Heidelberg, Jim Pyrgolios was replaced with Jeff Olver.

The Chalkitis move is not surprising. Bentleigh president Malissa Fischer-Massa was president of Altona when Cole was coach and won her a premiership. She's a great admirer of Cole's abilities.

Chalkitis became Bentleigh's savior last season and has been at the Greens off-and-on for some time. He was considering making a move to Bulleen at the start of this season, but decided to stick with the Greens.

Pyrgolios too was a hero last season, lifting the Bergers back into the premier league. But success is only as lasting as the last win. His replacement, Olver tried to keep Heidelberg in the VPL two seasons ago as stand-in coach for the last six matches — and nearly succeeded.

Three of his predecessors failed to keep their job in the process as the Bergers spiralled dowwards. Olver will need to combine his duties at Heidelberg with those at Carlton as youth coach — at least for the time being.

But the coast is not clear yet. Despite draws over the weekend, Zoran Trajcevski at Altona and Peter Tsolakis at Port Melbourne are feeling the pressure, as well as Oakleigh's player-coach Ike Alogiozidis. Chalkitis may be a candidate should the axe fall.

Victorian club officials are renowned for their impatience when results are not forthcoming — and it is always easier to blame the coach than to fall on one's own sword.

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MAGIC PENALISES BLUES

By Bert van Bedaf

Altona savoured a moment of magic, while Fawkner caught the blues in a 2-2 draw at Paisley Reserve last Saturday night.

Fawkner were seething as Altona snatched a point with a last minute penalty that should not have been necessary.

With the score 2-1 in Fawkner's favour and less than a minute on the clock, Altona's George Jolevski launched a long ball into attack. Johnny Cvetanovski chased it, but the ball looked well out of his reach.

But Fawkner 'keeper Maurice Gonzalez did the unpardonable. He feigned to pick up the ball, did a bit of jig and then went to clear it and missed.

Meanwhile substitute Cvetanovski, on for Zlate Ristevski in the 69th minute, came steaming in and Gonzalez blocked him.

Referee Nestor Zachariadis immediately awarded a penalty, but refrained from red-carding Fawkner's wayward 'keeper. Gonzalez stayed under the bar but could not stop the spot-kick. Zoran Todorovski blasted it home to give Altona a last-gasp draw.

Fawkner coach Ken Murphy descibed the folly as "a major blunder". The players were beyond belief. Supporters outside the dressing room debated the win that got away at length.

Altona coach Zoran Trajcevski was relieved. "We're happy to get a draw to break a losing streak. We have eight players injured, but tonight we saw some improvement," he said.

Robert Stojcevski got Fawkner the lead after five minutes with a 25-metre shot in the top right corner. It was a cracker from a poor Altona defensive clearance.

But Altona drew level after 16 minutes from a well-worked corner.

Jolevski curled it close to the near post, where Tony Trifunov drilled it through the Fawkner defence and into the net.

Fawkner hit the lead again 10 minutes into the second half. Agim Sherifovski took a corner that Peter Psarros headed towards goal. Altona 'keeper Darren McGrath blocked it but Eric Vassiliadis struck the rebound and the Blues seemed headed for a win.

Until Gonzalez showed too much South-American flair and made a meal of what should have been a simple clearance.

CANNONS DRAW SHARKS

By David Davutovic

A resilient Oakleigh displayed the fighting qualities that won them promotion last season with a gutsy 3-3 home draw with Port Melbourne at Jack Edwards Reserve last Friday night.

The first Port goal was scored off a goalkeeping blunder when Nick Koletsas' goal kick headed straight to Nick Tsaltas who ran in and slotted the ball home for the opener after 18 minutes.

But Oakleigh levelled in the 23rd minute when player-coach Ike Alogiozidis smashed home a volley from close range Against the run of play, Port Melbourne took the lead on the stroke of half time as Tsaltas' 25-metre strike took a deflection off Oakleigh's Felix Rosman and gave the hapless Koletsas no chance.

The second half saw the pendulum swing once again as an Oakleigh counter attack finished up with Alogiozidis, who calmly chipped the advancing Port 'keeper Chris Roche.

Bill Nalpanditis controlled the midfield for Oakleigh in the second half, and he rattled the crossbar with a stunning 30-metre strike in the 55th minute. However, Alogiozidis stamped his mark on the game two minutes later as he got on the end of a cross to lob Roche with a pinpoint header.

Not for the first time, the Sharks were able to gain something out of a seemingly helpless situation, when impact player Damon Collina headed past Koletsas to equalise, after Sam Poutakidis' crossed from the left flank.

Alogiozidis was denied a fairytale finale as he and substitute Andrew Strapelias had dangerous shots on goal thwarted by Roche deep into stoppage time.

Victorian Soccer Federation *Eat Well Live Well*

PREMIER LEAGUE 2000

Firsts

Friday 10 March 2000

Oakleigh Cannons .3 (Ike Alagiozidis 3) Damon Collina) **Pt Melb Sharks .....3** (Nick Tsaltas, own goal,

Saturday 11 March 2000

Altona Magic ....2 (George Jolevski, Zoran Todorovski) **Fawkner Blues .....2** (Robert Stojcevski, Eric Vassiliadis)

Sunday 12 March 2000

St Albans Saints ..2 (Damian Vojtek, Kon Sianidis) **Preston Lions 0**

Monday 13 March 2000

Bulleen Zebras v Bentleigh Greens
Heidelberg United v Altona East Phoenix
Melbourne Raiders v Green Gully Cavaliers

Reserves

Friday 10 March 2000

Oakleigh Cannons .0 Pt Melb Sharks 2

Saturday 11 March 2000

Altona Magic ....3 Fawkner Blues 2

Sunday 12 March 2000

St Albans Saints ..2 Preston Lions 2

Monday 13 March 2000

Bulleen Zebras v Bentleigh Greens
Heidelberg United v Altona East Phoenix
Melbourne Raiders v Green Gully Cavaliers

LEAGUE LADDER

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Green Gully Cavaliers	5	5	0	0	16	2	15
St Albans Saints	6	3	2	1	13	8	11
Altona East Phoenix	5	3	1	1	5	5	10
Preston Lions	6	2	2	2	9	9	8
Fawkner Blues	6	2	2	2	7	8	8
Bentleigh Greens	5	2	1	2	8	5	7
Pt Melb Sharks	6	2	1	3	13	16	7
Altona Magic	6	1	3	2	9	12	6
Melbourne Raiders	5	1	2	2	6	7	5
Bulleen Zebras	5	1	2	2	6	8	5
Oakleigh Cannons	6	1	2	3	7	13	5
Heidelberg United	5	1	0	4	8	14	3

Round 7

Friday 17 March 2000

Port Melbourne Sharks v Green Gully Cavaliers

Sunday 19 March 2000

Fawkner Blues v Oakleigh Cannons

Preston Lions v Altona Magic

Altona East Phoenix v St Albans Saints

Bentleigh Greens v Heidelberg United

Monday 20 March 2000

Bulleen Zebras v Melbourne Raiders

NSW Soccer Federation

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— ROUND 10 WRAP-UP —

WET WEEKEND SPOILS ROUND

Wet, wet, wet was the theme of the weekend for NSW soccer with five games postponed due to the rain in Super League alone, with one game on each of Saturday and Sunday.

The match between Central Coast and Parramatta Eagles proved an exciting finish for spectators who witnessed a great escape for the home side.

Despite dominating for long periods of the game, the home side was unable to convert their many chances and Parramatta Eagles looked certain to come away with a win with goals in the eighth and 82nd minutes to Delicata and Joseski.

However, Central Coast continued to attack and pulled one back with five minutes to go of normal time and scored the equaliser - much to the delight of the home fans - in the six minutes of stoppage time, for 2-2.

Sunday's only game was a game of two halves, but an inspired first-half performance from St. George was enough to defeat the Bankstown City Lions 2-1 at Jensen Park.

The Saints coming off a 5-2 hiding at the expense of Eastern Suburbs were solid but a little unconvincing as they racked up two goals in the first 21 minutes and then set about defending that lead for long periods in the second half.

At times the football was not pretty or brilliant for the large crowd but St George showed enough to convince their fans they are back on track and worthy of a place in the top five.

Only one of the postponed fixtures has been re-scheduled — Sutherland Sharks take on Canterbury Marrickville under the helm of former Socceroo, Jimmy Patikas, at Seymour Shaw Park on Thursday 16 March at 7.00pm.

TOP SCORERS
AFTER ROUND 10

PLAYER	CLUB	GOALS
Johnny Ghisso	Bonnyrigg	10
Steve Karavatakis	Leichhardt	10
Joe Bruni	Leichhardt	8
Jimmy Aschner	Eastern Subs	7
Nikolce Joseski	Parramatta	7
Mark Hagger	Blacktown	6
Adam Anderson	Parramatta	6
Jim Bakis	St George	6

SCORERS

SUPER LEAGUE FIRST GRADE

Sutherland Sharks, Canterbury Marrickville Bernies **Washed Out**

Central Coast Coasties 2 (S Matthews 85m, A Peatey 89m), **Parramatta Eagles 2** (B Delicata 8m, N Joseski 82m)

Blacktown City Demons, Leichhardt Tigers **Washed Out**

Bankstown City Lions 1 (G Issa 76m), **St George Saints 2** (J Bakis 10m, A Petratos 21m)

Eastern Suburbs Wanderers, Bonnyrigg White Eagles **Washed Out**

Fairfield Bulls, Macarthur Rams **Washed Out**

Manly Warringah Dolphins, Penrith Panthers **Washed Out.**

RESULTS

	1st	U/21	U/18
Sutherland v Cant-Marrickville	w/o	w/o	w/o
Central Coast v Parramatta	2-2	0-3	5-1
Blacktown v Leichhardt	w/o	w/o	w/o
Bankstown v St George	1-2	w/o	w/o
Eastern Suburbs v Bonnyrigg	w/o	w/o	w/o
Fairfield v Macarthur	w/o	w/o	w/o
Manly Warringah v Penrith	w/o	w/o	w/o

OTHER RESULTS

FEDERATION DIVISION ONE

FIRST GRADE: Illawarra Lions, Dulwich Hill Washed Out: Hajduk Wanderers, Hurstville City Minotaurs Washed Out: AC United, Auburn United Washed Out: Rockdale City Suns 3 (S Najdoski 71m, A Adamo 59/83m), Ryde City Gunners 0: Fraser Park, Bathurst '75 Washed Out: Stanmore Hawks, M.S.C. Liverpool Washed Out.

UNDER 21: Illawarra Lions, Dulwich Hill Washed Out: Hajduk Wanderers, Hurstville City Minotaurs Washed Out: AC United, Auburn United Washed Out: Rockdale City Suns 1, Ryde City Gunners 4: Fraser Park, Bathurst '75 Washed Out: Stanmore Hawks, M.S.C. Liverpool Washed Out.

UNDER 18: Illawarra Lions, Dulwich Hill Washed Out: Hajduk Wanderers, Hurstville City Minotaurs Washed Out: AC United, Auburn United Washed Out: Rockdale City Suns 0, Ryde City Gunners 4: Fraser Park, Bathurst '75 Washed Out: Stanmore Hawks, M.S.C. Liverpool Washed Out.

FEDERATION DIVISION TWO

FIRST GRADE: Belmore Hercules, Sydney University Washed Out: Mt Pritchard, Greystanes Washed Out: University of NSW, Mt Druitt Town Rangers Washed Out: Sydney District, Hakoah Washed Out: Central Coast Lakers, Hills United Washed Out: White City, Hurstville ZSC Washed Out.

UNDER 21: Belmore Hercules, Sydney University Washed Out: Mt Pritchard, Greystanes Washed Out: University of NSW, Mt Druitt Town Rangers Washed Out: Sydney District, Hakoah Washed Out: Central Coast Lakers, Hills United Washed Out: White City, Hurstville ZSC Washed Out.

UNDER 18: Belmore Hercules, Sydney University Washed Out: Mt Pritchard, Greystanes Washed Out: University of NSW, Mt Druitt Town Rangers Washed Out: Sydney District, Hakoah Washed Out: Central Coast Lakers, Hills United Washed Out: White City, Hurstville ZSC Washed Out.

TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
Leichhardt Tigers	9	6	1	2	26	14	12	19
St George Saints	10	6	1	3	19	14	5	19
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	9	6	0	3	26	19	7	18
Central Coast Coasties	10	5	3	2	19	12	7	18
Blacktown City Demons	9	5	1	3	26	9	17	16
Parramatta Eagles	10	4	4	2	22	16	6	16
Bankstown City lions	10	4	3	3	16	11	5	15
Canterbury Marrickville	9	4	0	5	14	24	-10	12
Macarthur Rams	9	2	4	3	13	13	0	10
Eastern Suburbs	9	3	0	6	14	17	-3	9
Manly Warringah Dolphins	9	2	3	4	11	20	-9	9
Fairfield Bulls	9	2	2	5	13	17	-4	8
Sutherland Sharks	9	2	1	6	11	26	-15	7
Penrith Panthers	9	2	1	6	7	25	-18	7

NSW SOCCER FEDERATION

Super League

Kick-off times – 5.00pm (1st Grade), 3.00pm (U21s), 1.00pm (U18s) unless otherwise stated

Saturday 18 March 2000

Blacktown City Demons v Central Coast Coasties
Gabbie Stadium
2pm (U18s), 4pm (U21s), 6pm (1st Grade)

Bonnyrigg White Eagles v Bankstown City Lions
Serbian Centre
3pm (U18s), 5pm (U21s), 7pm (1st Grade)

Macarthur Rams v Eastern Suburbs
Lynwood Park
3pm (U18s), 5pm (U21s), 7pm (1st Grade)

Sunday 19 March 2000

St George v Manly-Warringah
St George Stadium

Canterbury Marrickville v Fairfield Bulls
Henson Park

Parramatta Eagles v Sutherland Sharks
Melita Stadium

Leichhardt Tigers v Penrith Panthers
Lambert Park

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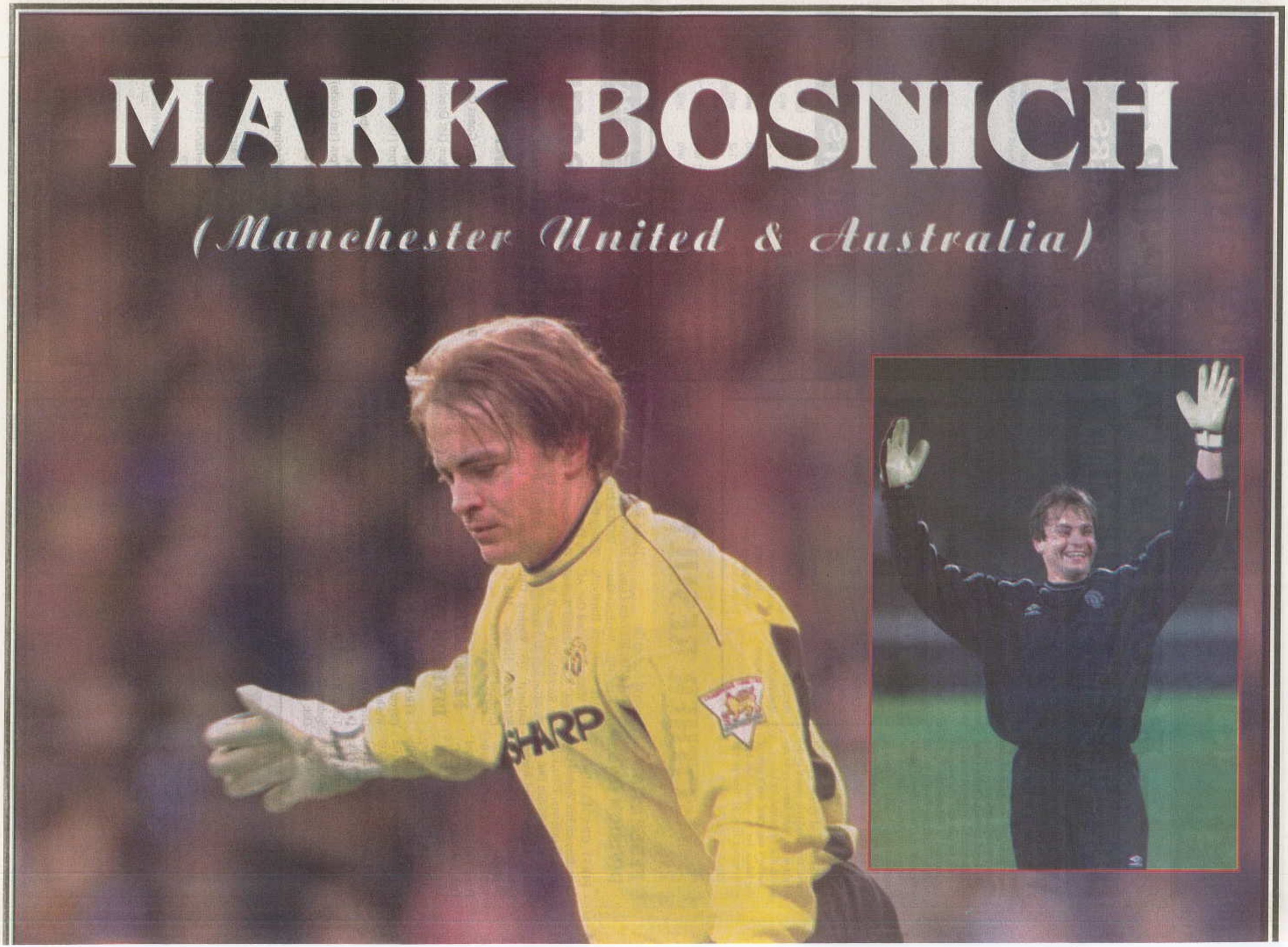
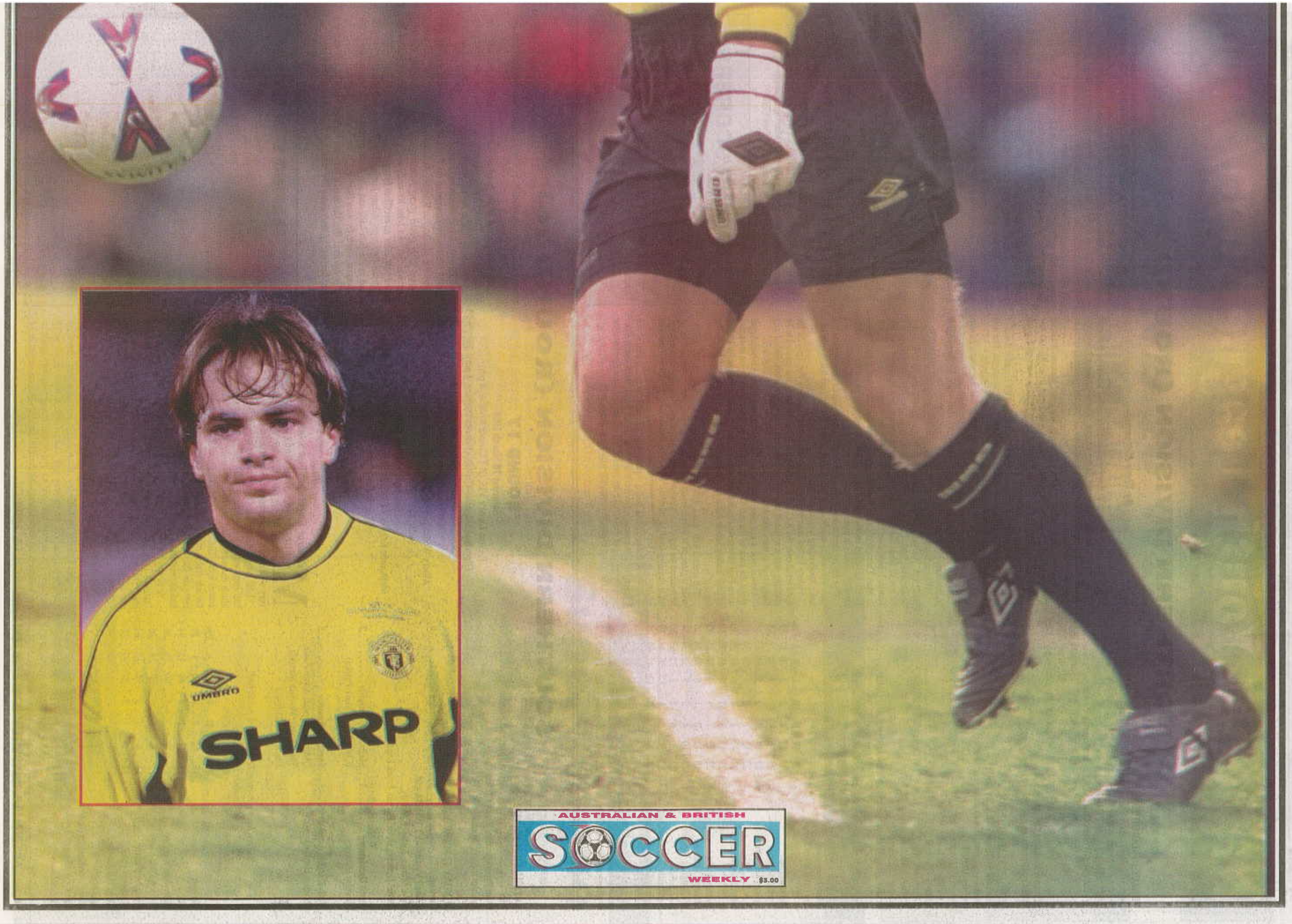
MARK BOSNICH

(Manchester United & Australia)

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National Youth League 1999/2000

NORTHERN DIVISION (ROUND 25)

FRIDAY 10 MARCH 2000
Newcastle Breakers v Sydney Olympic Academy
(Match postponed due to inclement weather)
SATURDAY 11 MARCH 2000
Wollongong Wolves Colts ..0...Parramatta Power 8
(Blagojevic 2', 64', B Santalab 35', (Thompson 50' pen, 81', Kukucka 53',Wright 83', Roodenburg 89')
Marconi Stallions Colts v Q.A.S.
(Match postponed due to inclement weather)

SUNDAY 12 MARCH 2000
Marconi Stallions v Q.A.S. (Rd 18)
(Match postponed due to inclement weather)
Sydney United .....3...A.C.T.A.S. 2
(Agyei 19', Mirosevic 37', Lo Proto 40') Arnott 65', Anstey 75')
Sydney Olympic .....4...A.I.S. 2
(Doumanis 14', Kyriazopoulos 42 Gasper 57', Miot 63') (Tsiorlas 22', Parisi 68')
Wollongong Wolves .....1...Northern Spirit Colts 1
(Rodriquez 12') Majurovski 32')
Newcastle Breakers Colts v Sydney United Spirit Colts
(Match postponed due to inclement weather)
N.S.W.I.S. v Marconi Stallions
(Match deferred)
Bye – Northern Spirit

	P	W	D	B	L	F	A	Pts
Parramatta	**23**	**17**	**4**	**2**	**2**	**70**	**17**	**55**
Northern Spirit	23	16	4	2	3	70	26	52
Sydney Olympic	23	14	4	2	5	61	32	46
Q.A.S.	22	13	2	2	7	63	36	41
Newcastle Breakers	21	13	1	1	6	41	25	40
A.I.S.	23	12	3	1	8	68	36	39
Sydney United	22	12	1	1	9	38	41	37
Marconi Stallions	18	12	0	1	6	50	24	36
Wollongong Wolves	23	10	4	2	9	33	34	34
A.C.T.A.S.	22	8	6	2	8	35	63	30
Newcastle Breakers Colts	23	9	2	1	12	36	44	29
Sydney Olympic Academy	22	8	1	2	13	41	69	25
N.S.W.I.S.	21	5	5	2	11	34	37	20
Marconi Stallions Colts	22	5	4	1	13	34	61	19
Sydney Utd Colts	21	3	3	2	15	22	53	12
Wollongong Wolves Colts	21	0	2	1	19	11	98	2

By Theo Katsaros

A wet and miserable Sydney weekend prevented a host of National Youth League fixtures going ahead. The problems began on Friday night in Newcastle and also forced the postponement of three other fixtures.

The Newcastle Breakers v Sydney Olympic Academy, Marconi Stallions Colts v Q.A.S., Marconi Stallions v Q.A.S. (deferred from Rd 18) and Newcastle Breakers Colts v Sydney United Colts fixtures were postponed and will be played at a later date.

On a brighter note, four matches were played despite the constant threat of rain. A total of 21 goals were scored in the four matches played. The wet conditions obviously made goalkeeping and defending a nightmare.

On Saturday the Wollongong Wolves Colts hosted the Parramatta Power. The Power took full advantage of their rival's hospitality and thumped their hosts by 8-0. The win puts the Power three points clear of the Northern Spirit in the chase for the minor premiership.

Milan Blagojevic scored after just two minutes to give the visitors the lead. The Wolves held out until the 35th minute until Brendan Santalab doubled the lead. The hosts must have been happy to go into the break only a couple of goals down but they could not maintain their resistance and fell further behind soon after half-time.

Matt Thompson scored from the penalty spot after 50 minutes and Daniel Kukucka added another three minutes later. Blagojevic added his second in the 64th minute to make it five.

The Power then scored three times in the last 10 minutes to complete the rout. Thompson struck again in the 81st minute before Lachlan Wright and Luke Roodenburg recorded singles.

Sydney United recorded their 12th victory this season as they held on for a 3-2 result over the A.C.T.A.S. United led 3-0 at the break and seemed to be cruising but a spirited second-half showing by the visitors ended any thoughts of an easy afternoon.

United took a one goal advantage after 19 minutes when Akwasi Agyel found the back of the net. The hosts pressed for another and were rewarded when Paul Mirosevic struck to increase the lead. It only got better for United as their leading scorer Allan Lo Proto added a third five minutes before the break.

The second half was a different story as the A.C.T.A.S. fought back to make a game of it. Steve Arnott was on the field less than 10 minutes before he reduced the deficit. A Matthew Anstey goal after 75 minutes set the scene for a thrilling final 15 minutes. However, the visitors ran out of time and Sydney United kept all three points.

At the Belmore Sport Ground, Sydney Olympic and the A.I.S. battled out a replay of last season's Northern Division Grand Final. Both teams have been struggling of late to find the form of last season and were desperate for the three points to stay in contention with the league leaders.

Olympic led after 14 minutes courtesy of an Anthony Doumanis goal. The A.I.S. equalised after 22 minutes when Mark Tsiorlas added to his ever increasing tally for the institute. A John Kyrlazopoulos goal just before half-time lifted Olympic and after the break the hosts took an unassailable lead.

Robert Gasper added a third in the 57th minute and Lee Miot made it four when he breached the A.I.S. defence after 63 minutes. Former Olympic Academy player Franco Parisi scored for the A.I.S. to add some respectability to the scoreline. The 4-2 win to Olympic may be the spark that the side needs to renew their premiership challenge.

The Wollongong Wolves and the Northern Spirit Colts played out a 1-1 draw at Brandon Park. In their past two outings the Spirit have recorded draws against rivals that are well above them on the ladder.

Harvey Rodriguez put the Wolves ahead after 12 minutes but John Majurovski levelled the scores in the 32nd minute. The teams played out the remainder of the match with neither side being able to add to the score.

FRIDAY 17 MARCH 2000
A.C.T.A.S. v Newcastle Breakers Colts (Bruce Stadium – 5.00pm)
Parramatta Power v Marconi Stallions Colts
(Parramatta Stadium – 5.30pm)

SATURDAY 18 MARCH 2000
Sydney United Colts v Newcastle Breakers (Sydney United Sports Centre – 4.00pm)
Q.A.S. v Sydney United (Suncorp Metway Stadium – 4.45pm)
Northern Spirit Colts v Northern Spirit (Christie Park - 6.30pm)
A.I.S. v Wollongong Wolves (A.I.S. Soccer Field – 7.00pm)

SUNDAY 19 MARCH 2000
Sydney Olympic Academy v N.S.W.I.S. (Wentworth park – 4.00pm)
Marconi Stallions v Sydney Olympic (Marconi Stadium – 8.15pm)
Bye – Wollongong Wolves Colts

LEADING SCORERS

Russell Miner	**Q.A.S.**	**20**
Ryan Griffiths	Northern Spirit	14
Daniel Severino	Marconi Stallions	13
Elias Demourtzidis	A.I.S.	11
Daniel Kukucka	Parramatta Power	11
Allan Lo Proto	Sydney United	11
Kevo Gulesserian	Marconi Stallions (A.I.S.)	10

SOUTHERN DIVISION (ROUND 16)

SATURDAY 11 MARCH 2000
VIS .....4...Gippsland Falcons 0
Evan Papadopoulos, Ricky Chillico, Ibrahim Ibraimi, Michael Sham-Yuen)

SUNDAY 12 MARCH 2000
Carlton .....8...Albury Wodonga 0
(Daniel Vasilevski 2, Eddie Awad, Steve Martin, Joshua Kennedy, Daniel Debevc, David Puccio, Frank Lagana)

South Dandenong .....1...Melbourne Knights 2
(Ibrahim Hamzic) (Chris Tabak, Mark Paleka)

Melb Knights Academy ....1...South Melbourne 5
(Ibrahim Hamzic) (Adrian Cuzzupe, Adam Poole, Tass Psonis, Mustafa Mustafa, Jim Archimandritis)

Bulleen Inter v Preston Lions (Match postponed)
Fawkner Blues v Bye

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Carlton	**15**	**12**	**3**	**0**	**60**	**8**	**39**
VIS	15	11	1	3	44	12	34
Melbourne Knights	15	8	2	5	40	28	26
Bulleen Inter Kings	15	8	2	5	38	28	26
South Melbourne	13	8	0	5	36	14	24
Gippsland Falcons	14	6	3	5	26	29	21
South Dandenong	14	5	3	6	20	26	18
Fawkner Blues	13	4	3	6	16	27	15
Melbourne Knights Academy	13	3	0	10	11	29	9
Albury Wodonga	15	2	2	11	18	57	8
Preston Lions	14	1	1	12	13	64	4

ROUND 17

Saturday 18 March 2000
Preston Lions v VIS, (B T Connor Reserve, 4 pm)
Gippsland Falcons v Carlton, (Falcons Stadium, 4 pm)
South Dandenong v Melb Knights Academy,
(George Andrews Reserve, 4 pm)
Albury Wodonga v South Melbourne, (Alexandra Park, 4 pm)

Sunday 19 March 2000
Melbourne Knights v Fawkner Blues, (Knights Stadium, 3.30 pm)
Bulleen Inter v Bye

By Roy Hay

Melbourne Knights just beat South Dandenong by 2-1 in a tight game on a very windy day at George Andrews Reserve. Missing six regulars South Dandenong played very well according to coach Goran Runje.

Left winger Chris Tabak opened the scoring for the Knights on the half hour with a free kick and Mark Paleka scored after 50 minutes. The home defence failed to close down the Knights' player after a short corner kick. The South Dandenong goal came from Mentor Memeti. In the late stages of the game South Dandenong hit the woodwork but could not gain the equalising goal the outfield play warranted. Daniel Rajher had an outstanding game at sweeper.

A couple of weeks ago it was reported that Knights youth coach Luciano Trani had introduced 13-year-old Serkan Oksuz. My comment was "This young striker banged in 40 goals in the Super League last year and is definitely one to watch". Ernie Merrick at the VIS offered the youngster a trial and in light of that has signed him up for a scholarship at the Institute.

The Victorian Institute of Sport had a comfortable 4-0 win over Gippsland Falcons on Saturday. Evan Papadopoulos's goal after four minutes put the VIS on its way and Ricky Chillico made it 2-0 in 34 minutes. The second half saw an end to end match until two goals in quick succession settled things for the VIS. Ibrahim Ibraimi scored in 74 minutes, followed immediately by a second goal in as many matches for Michael Sham-Yuem.

Carlton continued at the head of the league after its 8-0 win over Albury Wodonga. Daniel Vasilevski scored twice and all the other goals were singles by Eddie Awad, speedy Steve Martin, Joshua Kennedy, Daniel Debevc, David Puccio and Frank Lagana.

South Melbourne dominated the first half running away to a 4-0 lead against the Melbourne Knights Academy, but the second half was a different story as the young Academy lads fought back and the final score was 5-1. As John Kennedy said afterwards, "We only drew the second half, after an excellent first period."

Adrian Cuzzupe, Adam Poole, Tass Psonis and Mustafa Mustafa scored in the first half, and Jim Archimanditis in the second for South Melbourne, while Ibrahim Hamzic got the Academy's goal.

It is reported that the match between Bulleen and Preston was not played because of inadequate line markings. Fawkner had the bye.

LEADING SCORERS

Anthony Pelikan	**Melbourne Knights**	**14**
Adam Curcija	Bulleen	10
David Martin	Albury Wodonga	9
Angelo Motsiopoulos	Carlton	9
Andrew Mashoian	South Melbourne	9
David Terek	VIS	9
Xhezair Sulimani	Bulleen	7
Ace Stojcevski	Carlton	7
Evan Papadopoulos	VIS	7
Deniz Ekici	Carlton	6
Naum Sekulovski	VIS	6
David Debevc	Carlton	6
Tony Pardo	Gippsland Falcons	5
Carmelo Impiombato	Melbourne Knights	5
Josip Loncaric	Melbourne Knights	5
Ali Ibrahim	Preston Lions	5
Anthony Magnacca	South Melbourne	5
Mark Tsiorlas	VIS	5

FAMOUS PHOTOS

Parramatta Power fans (from left) Chrystal, Christine, Luke and Natalie flank their favourite Power player and Olyroo Jacob Burns.
The message from these fans is ... GO THE POWER!

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SOCCER WOMAN

By Janene Mar

THE LONG ROAD BACK

One day, Australian captain; the next, left out in the cold. Defender Sonia Gegenhuber has endured the rockiest of roads since missing selection for the 1999 World Cup back in May last year.

At the time, she was Australia's second highest-capped player with 60 internationals to her name, as well as Matildas captain.

A frustrating spate of injuries was to prove her downfall in those last crucial months, topped with a suspected stress fracture to the shin, leaving her absent from

Sonia Gegenhuber: In action for the Matildas in 1997.

the training track at the most important time. Although receiving advice to the contrary, Gegenhuber felt in herself she would still be fit in time, only then to find her name not amongst the 20 for the World Cup.

"It was a big shock actually - I still thought I had a chance," recalls Gegenhuber. "I guess I was a bit disillusioned, after doing all the pool training, I was thinking I'd still be right. I was disappointed just in the whole way it went.

Obviously they were precautious because of my history with stress fractures, but in the end it cost me I guess a chance at the World Cup. But if I look at the other side, if I'd kept training, it may have developed (into something worse). It was a Catch 22 situation really."

"Basically I didn't feel like it was harder because I was captain - I always treated myself as a player anyway," she added. "But it was really strange, being captain, to being out of the team altogether."

The shock news of missing selection was in itself a cutting blow, but in essence was really just the start of a truly harrowing period. Standing by whilst the Team excitedly jetted off for the US and the biggest event in history, Gegenhuber was left distraught and confused. Not only was she not to compete in her second World Cup after such a concentrated effort for that one event, but just as painful was not knowing what lay before her.

It was the end of the AIS scholarship period, and the next selections would not be made until after the team's return from the World Cup and a full review made of the players and the program. That would be another two or three months down the track.

The uncertainty of it all left the 28-year-old no option but to return home to Brisbane.

"I was really in limbo then. Where to from here? I didn't know if I'd be playing again. It was very hard, a very tough six months, plus a lot of factors were going through my life right then. I had a lot of close friends around me, and spent a lot of time back in Adelaide with my family. Looking back on it now, it's made me a stronger character, living through that experience."

The news did not get any better. National Coach Greg Brown resigned after the World Cup, and Chris Tanzey as Caretaker Coach made the new selections for the September 1 resumption of the AIS program. The name Gegenhuber had not reappeared. Her 2000 Olympic Games dream was all but shattered.

"Coaches have different ideas. A new coach doesn't always select the same players, and I was one who was not in his overall picture. (The thought was then) I've got to get on with life, find a job, got to let things go. Then national league started anyway, and I thought, if I make it, then good, if I don't, I don't. But I did my knee and that was the end of that. Maybe it was meant to be.

"I was so glad when 1999 was over - it was the lowest of years in quite some time."

Making the transition from a 'career' as an international athlete to that of a more regular existence is more than just coping with the disappointments, especially when it is a sudden forced exit from the sport which has consumed all your adult years and been your one central focus.

The changes to be made affect all aspects of everyday life, a harder process than it appears on the surface. It wasn't until Gegenhuber had made those changes that she was able to start to enjoy her new situation.

"Soccer had been a part of my life for 10 years. Then it was just one thing after another — missing the World Cup, moving back to Brisbane, finding a job, changing my daily routine.

I'd spend half a day doing nothing, which is hard when you're so used to being so active. It took a long while to get used to the change in lifestyle. But then I just went out and enjoyed it.

"It was good getting to know friends a lot better, and seeing the other side of life. Just going out to tea and knowing you didn't have to get up early to go to the gym. I could spend quality time with my family and not have to think I've got to go to training. Not having those strict guidelines - I began to like that."

"I try to look at everything very positively now. Ten years was a long time to play for Australia, and the sport has gone in leaps and bounds from where we started to now. I travelled the world so many times, so if you look at it that way, if I wasn't in the Australian Team, I probably wouldn't have been overseas yet. And I went to the World Cup.

"If I go back to when I was ten years old and someone said I would play for Australia, I never thought I would. I'd always wanted to represent Australia, but I didn't know in what back then. I only started soccer at 16. When I was running, I thought the 800 metres moreso than soccer. Whatever I've done, I wanted to get to Australian level. Once I made State soccer, then I thought I want to be the best, play with the best.

"I've had a lot of experiences, met a lot of people, learnt a lot. It would have been great to cap it off and retire after the Olympics and the last World Cup, but obviously it was not meant to be."

In the end, a week before Christmas, it was the knee surgery which finally freed Gegenhuber, and was to become a major turning point in her life.

"Having the knee reconstruction mellowed me out. After it, I could do nothing for four weeks and I couldn't work for a couple of months. From being so active to just sitting around was very hard. I'm more relaxed now. I looked at life with a different perspective, my lifestyle and views changed completely."

Yet after coming through that darkest of times, Gegenhuber has recently made a welcome return to the elite soccer scene, when the easier option may well have been to quit the game altogether. Since the beginning of last month, she has taken on the position of QAS Assistant Coach, working under ITC Coach Mike Mulvey for the winter competition.

Gegenhuber had previously done bits and pieces of coaching and completed

Sonia Gegenhuber: At the AIS.

her Level 2 qualifications. Once back in Brisbane, she'd had a meeting with the Athlete Career and Education people and had written down that she'd like to get involved in coaching again and perhaps work her way up the ranks.

"It happened a lot quicker than I expected. When I was asked, I thought I may as well take the opportunity. I really enjoy it. It's something different - I needed another challenge.

"I enjoy helping players if they want to be helped. I'll give my best to help in every way I can to help them achieve their goals. I think there are so many talented young girls around now - they should be given every opportunity to improve. If I can help by sharing some of my experience, then what better opportunity than this.

"It's different now, because I know a lot of the players, even hang out with some of them, I'm a coach now, not a player. I've got to watch what I say, and behave differently, and watch what I tell them. But it's good because I know what the players are going through - been there, done that."

Gegenhuber feels she might like to continue past her August contract and into the national league season, but is not setting any defined goals at this stage.

Although making good progress, coping fully with her sudden exit from the Matildas will still take some time.

Come September with all the hoopla surrounding the Olympic Games, Gegenhuber will be tested to the max. It's difficult enough now, Gegenhuber having watched the Matildas in January whilst visiting family in Adelaide.

"At the Olympics, I don't know if I'll be watching them. It's hard watching, thinking 'God I could be out there'. It's still hard to cope with.

"My dream was always to compete in the Olympics. It was one of my ultimate dreams and now that's shattered. I still find it difficult when there's talk of the Olympics. It wasn't my choice to leave the Australian Team, so it's hard to come to terms with."

But life goes on, and Gegenhuber has filled her days with other exciting activities. As well as her QAS position, she coaches schoolchildren through the Snickers program, and has returned to full-time studies. The former primary school teacher has taken up studying Remedial Therapy which includes such fields as massage, aromatherapy and reflexology.

As an athlete, she has turned her attention to triathlons, having competed in a couple previously, and long holding something of an interest in the sport.

Still three to four months away from returning to fitness after the reconstruction, she's looking at competing in the Noosa Triathlon, an Olympic distance event comprised of a 1500 metre swim, 40km cycle, and 10km run.

Gegenhuber joined a swim squad as soon as her knee healed and is pleased with her progress in the water, her weakest of the triathlon sectors. But triathlons is more something she'd like to do rather than a deep obsession.

"I'm not looking long term. I've no set plan, no pressure, no goals. I take each week as it comes. As long as I can do something active, I'm happy. It's a challenge I've set myself, especially physically, I'm not ready to give up sport yet. It's a good a time as ever to give it a go."

MATILDAS HEAD TO GOLD COAST

Filling the void left by Nigeria's late withdrawal from the 3-Test Series, the Matildas will head north to Southport, on Queensland's Gold Coast, for an intensive training camp between 16-24 March.

The change of scenery will do the team good, after getting over the disappointment of playing no internationals at least for another couple of months.

The camp schedule will remain similar to that of their AIS program back in Canberra, including their regular two training games per week against male teams.

On Saturday March 18 the Matildas will take on the Gold Coast U15 Representative Team at Burleigh Heads Soccer Club. Tuesday March 21 will see them face the Gold Coast City XXXX Youth Team, 7pm at Palm Beach Soccer Club.

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XXXX LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	GF	AG	Pts
Brisbane City	4	4	0	0	12	3	12
IPSW Knights	4	3	0	1	10	3	9
Rochedale Rov	4	2	0	2	8	7	6
Wynnum	4	1	2	1	7	6	5
Toowoomba Utd	4	1	2	1	4	4	5
Brisbane Lions	4	1	2	1	2	3	5
B'berg Waves	4	1	1	2	4	5	4
Mt Gravatt	4	1	1	2	6	10	4
Gold Coast	4	1	0	3	3	8	3
Taringa Rovers	4	0	2	2	2	9	2

ROUND 4

IPSW Knights .....2 B'berg Waves 0
Taringa Rovers .....1 Toowoomba Utd 1
Brisbane City .....4 Mt Gravatt 2
Wynnum .....2 Rochedale Rov 3
Gold Coast .....0 Brisbane Lions 1

DIVISION ONE SOUTH

	P	W	D	L	GF	AG	Pts
Eastern Subs	4	3	1	0	13	5	10
Olympic Utd	3	3	0	0	11	2	9
Acacia Ridge	4	2	1	1	10	8	7
Rocklea Utd	4	1	2	1	8	7	5
Slacks Creek	4	1	1	2	4	10	4
South Utd	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Beenleigh	4	1	0	3	4	13	3
Capalaba	3	0	1	2	2	4	1
Redlands Utd	3	0	1	2	4	7	1

ROUND 4

Eastern Subs .....2 Capalaba 1
Beenleigh .....0 Slacks Creek 3
Souths Utd .....0 Rocklea Utd 0
Redlands Utd .....2 Acacia Ridge 4
Olympic Utd - bye

DIVISION ONE NORTH

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
North Star	4	4	0	0	13	2	12
Uni of Qld	3	2	0	1	14	6	6
Mitchelton	3	2	0	1	8	7	6
Newmarket	4	1	3	0	8	7	6
North Pine	4	2	0	2	7	9	6
Pine Rivers Utd	3	1	1	1	7	5	4
The Gap	4	1	0	3	7	10	3
Grange Thistle	3	0	1	2	2	10	1
Albany Creek	4	0	1	3	6	16	1

ROUND 4

The Gap .....5 Albany Creek 1
North Pine .....1 North Star 3
Newmarket .....3 Pine Rivers Utd 3
Uni of Qld .....6 Grange Thistle 0
Mitchelton - Bye

Slater double sees off Mt Gravatt

By Glenn Davis

Ipswich Knights finally got their revenge on bogey side Bundaberg Waves with a 2-0 home win to maintain the pressure on early season pacesetters Brisbane City in the Queensland premier league at the weekend.

Brisbane City stayed three points clear at the top of the table from Ipswich after recording their fourth consecutive win when they downed Mt Gravatt 4-2 at Spencer Park.

While Ipswich were desperate to stay in touch with Brisbane City, the Knights rewarded their loyal home fans with their first victory over Bundaberg since coach Frank Pimblett took charge last season.

Bundaberg had the wood on the Knights in last year's clashes with two wins and a draw but this year it was sweet revenge for Pimblett and co.

Ipswich had control of the game by half time after leading 2-0 following goals from Wayne Adams and Troy Reece.

The visitors tried desperately to play their way back into the game in the second half but some solid Ipswich defence kept Bundaberg scoreless.

The team many are predicting for premiership honours this year, Brisbane City, scored two goals in each half before overpowering a brave Mt Gravatt.

The league's leading goal scorer Chris Slater and Allan Cameron gave the home side a comfortable 2-0 half-time lead before a late charge from Mt Gravatt.

Mt Gravatt's new signing Anthony McCullough and Lincoln Greaves found the net twice for the visitors after the break but it was not enough with Slater grabbing his second along with midfielder Nathan Carlos.

Slater's double extended his season's tally to six goals from only four games to lead nearest rival Rochedale's Matt Olley by two goals.

Olley was again in form posting his own double in Rochedale's thrilling 3-2 win over the previously unbeaten Wynnum Wolves.

The match was scoreless at half time before Olley and Paul Grugan struck for the visitors while Wynnum responded with goals from Owen Filewood and Mark Alaru.

Rochedale went into the match being described as under-achievers, which obviously did not sit well with some of their players.

In contrast, the Peter Tokesi coached Wynnum have been proving a handful for their opponents as Brisbane Lions will vouch for following their 0-0 draw the previous round with the Wolves.

Rochedale's victory sees last year's premiers move into third place on six points, just two wins away from leaders Brisbane City.

While Brisbane City, Ipswich and Rochedale have been the form sides, the same can't be said about the Gold Coast, Brisbane Lions and Taringa.

Brisbane Lions finally got their first win of the season, courtesy of striker Sasha Radulovic, in their 1-0 win over the Gold Coast while Taringa remain in an unfamiliar position at the bottom of the table after drawing 1-0 at home with Toowoomba.

Brisbane Lions' form has been well below expectations this year, considering their off-season buying and selling.

Coach John Ogden was desperate for a win but has not panicked despite their poor start to the season.

Ogden said before the Gold Coast clash, that his side would only get better as the season progressed and questioned two disallowed goals in the previous round draw with Wynnum.

Chris Slater: Double strike for Brisbane City.

ROUND 5 FIXTURES

March 17
Rochedale Rov v Gold Coast
7.30pm

March 18
B'berg Waves v Brisbane Lions
7.00pm

March 19
Mt Gravatt v Wynnum
4.00pm

Toowoomba Utd v Brisbane City
4.00pm

IPSW Knights v Taringa Rovers
4.00pm

COWIE QUITS

Likeable Scotsman George Cowie has stunned Queensland soccer circles with his shock resignation as Sunshine Coast director of coaching.

Cowie, who guided Wynnum to a Queensland Cup victory in his first season as coach in Brisbane two years ago, has been appointed coach of the Solomon Islands national team.

Cowie, 38, a former West Ham, Hearts and Dunfermline player, originally sought the Cook Island's coaching position before the Solomon Island's came up with a better deal.

"The Solomon Islands has nearly half a million people, compared to 80,000 in the Cook Islands, so there is the potential to develop more players," Cowie said.

Cowie is looking forward to his greatest coaching challenge but once his three-year stint with the Solomon Islands concludes, he hopes to return to Queensland.

"Queensland is a fantastic place to live," he said.

"Three years away might be long enough and I'll come back a more experienced coach."

Cowie's main task for the Solomon Islands is of Mt Everest proportions - trying to guide them to the 2002 World Cup.

Cowie said the Oceania qualifying stages were designed to ensure Australia and New Zealand played off to progress to the next stage, but he had not given up hope of causing an upset or two.

"Nobody ever thought Wynnum would win the Queensland Cup," he said.

WORLD

ITALIAN SERIE A

BARI 0
PARMA 1

Brazilian Marcio Amoroso, top scorer in Serie A last season, returned from his latest injury to claim his second goal of the campaign and give Parma a valuable away win which helped to lift the pressure on coach Alberto Malesani.

CAGLIARI 1
AS ROMA 0

Cameroon's Patrick Mboma missed three clear chances before putting Cagliari ahead with his seventh goal of the season.

Roma captain Francesco Totti hit the angle of the post and crossbar with a blistering shot from a tight angle but could not stop his side slipping to their second defeat in four days.

AC MILAN 3
VERONA 3

A thrilling tie in which Milan led twice before being deprived of a win by man of the match Fabrizio Cammarata.

Demetrio Albertini and Andriy Shevchenko put the champions 2-0 up before team mate Jose Antonio Chamot was sent off and Verona scored two quick goals.

Shevchenko's 19th of the season from the penalty spot seemed to have given Milan victory before Cammarata struck with an injury-time header.

PERUGIA 2
LECCE 2

Perugia were 2-0 down with 10 minutes to play in this mid-table clash but first Alessandro Calori and then Massimiliano Cappioli, with a brilliant long-range effort, secured them an unlikely draw.

Inter Milan striker Recoba celebrates his goal against Lazio. It ended 2-2.

Fiorentina midfielder Rui Costa dribbles past two Torino defenders. Fiorentina lost 1-0.

PIACENZA 0
JUVENTUS 2

Juve needed the entire first half to shake off their UEFA Cup hangover and Piacenza could have wrapped up the points before the interval.

But red-hot striker Filippo Inzaghi converted two assists from Alessandro Del Piero to take Carlo Ancelotti's side six points clear at the top.

REGGINA 0
UDINESE 0

The home side had the best of this low-key clash but failed to convert numerous chances against an Udinese side whose point takes them a step closer to a fourth consecutive UEFA Cup berth.

TORINO 1
FIORENTINA 0

Marco Ferrante's 12th goal of the season – a reflex volley after superb approach work from his team mates – was enough to give Torino victory over a Fiorentina side who only came alive after the break and will need to do much better against European Champions Manchester United tomorrow (Wednesday).

BOLOGNA 1
VENEZIA 1

Maurizio Ganz's left-foot shot put Venezia ahead against the run of play.

Bologna's Swedish midfielder Klas Ingesson struck the post with a header before compatriot Kennet Andersson, unmarked in the opposition box, slotted home the equaliser.

LAZIO 2
INTER MILAN 2

Lazio had by far the greater possession but found themselves 2-0 down with 10 minutes to play – even though Inter played the entire second half with 10 men after Colombian Ivan Cordoba was dismissed for a challenge on Marcelo Salas.

Substitute Simone Inzaghi brought Lazio back into the match before left back Giuseppe Pancaro scored a dramatic equaliser.

Oliver Bierhoff: Unable to inspire AC Milan to victory as they drew 3-3 with Verona.

RUSSO WRITES

By Joe Russo

Italian coaches at Atletico Madrid in Spain don't seem to last too long. Recently it was former Napoli and Fiorentina coach, Claudio Ranieri, who 'bit the dust.'

Ranieri was in his first year at the club after having spent two seasons at Valencia.

Two years ago another famous Italian coach, former national team boss Arrigo Sacchi, also didn't last a season at the club. Sacchi was clever enough to have secured a three-year contract and therefore when 'fired,' he received a substantial payout.

The only recent 'success story' of an Italian coach in Spain was Fabio Capello, the current Roma and former Milan mentor. Capello spent only a year at Real Madrid a few seasons ago, but did manage to win the title and break Barcelona's run of four consecutive championships.

Fabrizio Fabris (who?) is certainly not a household name in Italian football. He is a midfielder and the captain of struggling Serie B side, Ternana, the team in which Australian Vince Grella plays.

He has never played in the Serie A and since he is currently aged 31, may never do so.

However, recently, he has received some coverage because of his comments. Unfortunately, what he had to say is another sad indictment on Italian soccer fans.

Fabris claims that players personally fear for their lives and that numerous players have been threatened by hooligans. Furthermore, he says that most players are too afraid to speak out.

These very serious allegations should be investigated by all the relevant authorities, including the police.

And Fabris' comments were not made in some small and obscure newspaper either. They were made on national television in Italy's top rating news bulletin, the TG1. Sadly, it all just doesn't seem like 'calcio' anymore.

Roma and Lazio are the most bitter of rivals. In fact, no local derby in Italy is more fierce. Milan-Inter and Juventus-Torino derbies, just don't rate in comparison.

So it is very rare that these two teams do anything together. However, last week both club presidents, Sergio Cragnotti of Lazio and Franco Sensi of Roma, visited one of Rome's Jewish primary schools.

The reason for this unexpected 'partnership' is racism. The much publicised and disgraceful behaviour of so called 'fans,' has brought both clubs closer together.

Roma's Brazilian defender, Cafu, also visited the school with both Cragnotti and Sensi. It was a goodwill gesture that received a lot of media publicity and rightly so.

Should strugglers Piacenza be relegated at the end of the season, and it is extremely likely that they will be, then the curtain may finally come down on one of the greatest careers ever in the Serie A - the career of defender Pietro Vierchowod.

Vierchowod, who turns 41 in April, made his Serie A debut in 1980 with Como. In 1981 he moved to Fiorentina, in 1982 he joined Roma and in 1983 moved to Sampdoria, where he remained for 12 seasons. This was followed by a year each at Juventus and Milan and currently, he is into his third year at Piacenza.

Finally, just to add the 'icing on the cake' of a wonderful career, he has played for Italy on 45 occasions and has even managed to score two goals. Bravo!

WORLD

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

BRADFORD 1 LEEDS 2

Two goals for striker Michael Bridges settled a hard-fought West Yorkshire derby and kept Leeds within four points of leaders Manchester United.

Bridges scrambled in the first after 12 minutes and Alan Smith should have made it 2-0 when he side-footed wide in front of an open goal soon after.

Bridges touched in Leeds' second after 63 minutes but Peter Beagrie set up a tense finish with a superb 25-metre shot 15 minutes from time.

MIDDLESBROUGH 2 ARSENAL 1

Arsenal's dire away form continued after a disappointing display and some uncharacteristically loose defending.

The Gunners, who won this fixture 6-1 last season and beat Boro 5-1 at home in November, have not won away in any competition since December 4.

Middlesbrough, who have picked up in recent weeks after a dire run of their own, went ahead three minutes into the second half when Paul Ince was left unmarked to head in.

Hamilton Ricard cashed in on another error to make it 2-0 after 63 minutes while Dennis Bergkamp's nice lob seven minutes later counted for nothing.

Emile Heskey: New Liverpool recruit

Aussie goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer denies Arsenal striker Thierry Henry.

ASTON VILLA 1 COVENTRY CITY 0

Villa dominated the first half but had only Uho Ehiogu's header from a Paul Merson free kick in the 45th minute to show for it.

They also had the best of the second period but Julian Joachim missed a simple chance. Villa now eye Europe while Coventry are looking over their shoulder after four successive defeats.

CHELSEA 1 EVERTON 1

Dennis Wise, with his 50th league goal, shot third-placed Chelsea ahead after 29 minutes.

The Londoners, seeking a seventh successive home win, gradually took command but were caught out when Danny Cadamarteri seized onto a loose ball to touch in the equaliser in the 69th minute.

LIVERPOOL 1 SUNDERLAND 1

New 11 million pound ($27.5 million) signing Emile Heskey made an impact two minutes into his Liverpool debut as he forced Darren Williams into hauling him down in the box. Patrik Berger hammered home the resulting penalty.

Liverpool goalkeeper Sander Westerveld then clattered into Kevin Phillips ater 77 minutes and the England striker got up to bang in the penalty for a point Sunderland barely deserved

MANCHESTER UTD 3 DERBY COUNTY 1

Dwight Yorke had not scored a league goal since December 26 but broke his drought in style with a hat-trick.

He scored the first after 12 minutes when he caught goalkeeper Mart Poom in possession, though the Estonian made amends after half an hour when he saved a Paul Scholes penalty.

Branko Strupar briefly had Derby level after 66 minutes but Yorke hit back immediately with two goals in two minutes, heading in a Quentin Fortune cross and then finishing off a Roy Keane pass.

NEWCASTLE UTD 1 WATFORD 0

Alan Shearer missed two one-on-ones with the goalkeeper but Kevin Gallacher showed the way to goal with a simple tap-in from a Didier Domi cross after an hour.

Watford, spirited as ever, were denied three times by great Shay Given goalkeeping.

SHEFF WED 3 WEST HAM UTD 1

Three goals in 10 minutes gave Wednesday victory after Frank Lampard had scrambled West Ham ahead after 10 minutes.

Substitute Richard Cresswell slotted the equaliser 10 minutes after the break. Defender Andy Hinchcliffe then smacked home a 25-metre effort and a tame shot by Niclas Alexandersson completed the rare victory.

TOTTENHAM 7 SOUTHAMPTON 2

A remarkable win for Spurs as six goals in 19 first half minutes kept the fans on their toes.

Jo Tessam fired Southampton ahead in the 26th minute but Sol Campbell headed in a corner to make it 1-1. Tahar El Khalej, Saints' new Moroccan signing from Benfica, restored the lead with a sharp header only for Darren Anderton to equalise again.

Chris Armstrong then lashed in an unstoppable right-footer and Steffen Iversen cashed in on some slack defending to score the fourth in first-half injury time.

Spurs continued to pepper the Saints goal after the break and Armstrong, with a neat finish, made it 5-2. Iversen then took centre stage with well-taken goals to claim a hat-trick and complete a miserable return to White Hart Lane for Southampton boss Glenn Hoddle, a former Spurs hero.

WIMBLEDON 2 LEICESTER CITY 1

Wimbledon went ahead with a Neil Ardley penalty after 33 minutes.

Unmarked Gerry Taggart equalised after 55 minutes but Carl Cort scrambled in Wimbledon's winner three minutes from time.

Dwight Yorke: Jumps for the sky after scoring a hat-trick against Derby.

WORLD

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

GROUP A

Porto (Portugal)
Hertha Berlin (Germany)
Barcelona (Spain)
Sparta Prague (Czech Republic)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Hertha Berlin	1	Barcelona	1
Michalke 33		Luis Enrique 14	
Sparta Prague	0	Porto	2
		Drulovic 77, Jardel 84	

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Porto	1	Hertha Berlin	0
Drulovic 78			
Barcelona	5	Sparta Prague	0
Kluivert 44, 63			
Luis Enrique 45, 76			
Guardiola 59			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

Barcelona	4	Porto	2
Rivaldo 16, 90		Jardel 4, 79	
de Boer 22,			
Kluivert 45			
Hertha Berlin	1	Sparta Prague	1
Hertha Berlin-Viet 45		Siegl	

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Porto	0	Barcelona	2
		Abelardo 38, Rivaldo 59	
Sparta Prague	1	Hertha Berlin	0
Fukal 90			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

Barcelona v Hertha Berlin
Porto v Sparta Prague

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

Hertha Berlin v Porto
Sparta Prague v Barcelona

Table

Q- Barcelona	4	3	1	0	12	3	10
Porto	4	2	0	2	5	6	6
Sparta Prague	4	1	1	2	2	8	4
Hertha Berlin	4	0	2	2	2	4	2

Q= Qualify for quarter-finals

GROUP B

Bordeaux (France)
Fiorentina (Italy)
Manchester United (England)
Valencia (Spain)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

Fiorentina	2	Manchester Utd	0
Batistuta 25, Balbo 52			
Valencia	3	Bordeaux	0
Farinos 60, Ilie 66, Gonzalez 88			

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Bordeaux	0	Fiorentina	0
Manchester Utd	3	Valencia	0
Keane 38, Solskjaer 47			
Scholes 69			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1

Manchester Utd	2	Bordeaux	0
Giggs 42, Sheringham 84			
Fiorentina	1	Valencia	0
Mijatovic 20pen			

TUESDAY, MARCH 7

Bordeaux	1	Manchester Utd	2
Pavon 9		Keane 33, Solskjaer 84	
Valencia	2	Fiorentina	0
Ilie 34			
Mendieta 90pen			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15

Manchester Utd v Fiorentina
Bordeaux v Valencia

TUESDAY, MARCH 21

Fiorentina v Bordeaux
Valencia v Manchester Utd

Table

Manchester Utd	4	3	0	1	7	3	9
Fiorentina	4	2	1	1	3	2	7
Valencia	4	2	0	2	5	4	6
Bordeaux	4	0	1	3	1	7	1

GROUP C

Bayern Munich (Germany)
Dynamo Kiev (Ukraine)
Real Madrid (Spain)
Rosenborg Trondheim (Norway)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Dynamo Kiev	1	Real Madrid	2
Rebrov 85pen		Morientes 17, Raul 48	
Rosenborg	1	Bayern Munich	1
Skammelsrud 47		Jancker 10	

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

Bayern Munich	2	Dynamo Kiev	1
Jancker 6, Sergio 80		Rebrov 50	
Real Madrid	3	Rosenborg	1
Raul 17, Savio 85		Carew 47	
Carlos 90			

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Real Madrid	2	Bayern Munich	4
Morientes 24		Scholl 20,	
Raul 48,		Effenberg 23,	
		Fink 39,	
		Paolo Sergio 67	
Dynamo Kiev	2	Rosenborg	1
Khatskevich 10		Jokobsen 48	
Rebrov 29			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8

Rosenborg	1	Dynamo Kiev	2
Berg 38		Rebrov 32, 68	
Bayern Munich	4	Real Madrid	1
Scholl 4		Helguera 69	
Elber 30			
Zickler 79, 90			

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Real Madrid v Dynamo Kiev
Bayern Munich v Rosenborg

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

Dynamo Kiev v Bayern Munich
Rosenborg v Real Madrid

Table

Bayern Munich	4	3	1	0	11	5	10
Real Madrid	4	2	0	2	8	10	6
Dynamo Kiev	4	2	0	2	6	6	6
Rosenborg	4	0	1	3	4	8	6

GROUP D

Feyenoord (Netherlands)
Olympique Marseille (France)
Lazio (Italy)
Chelsea (England)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Marseille	0	Lazio	2
		Stankovic 64, Conceicao 78	
Chelsea	3	Feyenoord	1
Babayaro 45		Julio Cruz 90	
Tore Flo 67, 86			

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7

Feyenoord	3	Marseille	0
Cruz 72, 90			
Bosvelt 83			
Lazio	0	Chelsea	0

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 29

Lazio	1	Feyenoord	2
Veron 37		Tomasson 78, 84	
Marseille	1	Chelsea	0
Pires 16			

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8

Feyenoord	0	Lazio	0
Chelsea	1	Marseille	0
Wise 27			

TUESDAY, MARCH 14

Lazio v Marseille
Feyenoord v Chelsea

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22

Marseille v Feyenoord
Chelsea v Lazio

Table

Chelsea	4	2	1	1	4	2	7
Feyenoord	4	2	1	1	6	4	7
Lazio	4	1	2	1	3	2	5
Marseille	4	1	0	3	1	6	3

Bayern Crush Real Madrid as Matthaus bids farewell

Bayern Munich offered Lothar Matthaus the farewell gift he was dreaming of by crushing Real Madrid 4-1 for a place in the quarter-finals of the European Cup.

Bayern now top Group C with 10 points and the direct confrontations rule mean they will end up in the first two whatever the outcome of their two remaining games.

Real, who lost 4-2 to Bayern at the Santiago Bernabeu last week, still stand a chance of making it to the last eight.

It was an emotional occasion for the 38-year-old Matthaus, playing his last match for Bayern before starting a new adventure in the United States with New York-New Jersey MetroStars.

The visitors called for an offside when Germany midfielder Mehmet Scholl hit the back of the net after four minutes but the referee, ruling he had been set up by Real captain Fernando Hierro, awarded the goal.

Brazilian striker Elber made it 2-0 in the 30th minute when he exploited a defensive blunder from Hierro to flick the ball over Real 'keeper Iker Casillas.

Ivan Helguera reduced the arrears in the 69th minute with a strong shot from some 25 metres which flew into the top corner.

Substitute Alexander Zickler put the issue beyond doubt 10 minutes later when he struck from close range after a swift counter-attack. Zickler completed a fine win with a similar goal just before the final whistle.

Lothar Matthaus: Bows farewell to the Munich crowd.

QUARTER FINALS

First Leg — April 5
Second Leg — April 19

SEMI-FINALS

First Leg — May 3
Second Leg — May 10

FINAL

Wednesday, May 24
At Stade de France

WORLD

FIFA World Rankings

(Valid until March 15)

FIFA founded 1904

1	Brazil	70=	FYR Macedonia	138	Bahrain
2	Czech Republic	70=	Algeria	139	St Kitts & Nevis
3	France	72	Estonia	140	Tahiti
4	Spain	73	Guatemala	141	Benin
5	Germany	74	Honduras	142	St Vincent/Gr
6	Argentina	75	Mali	143	Andorra
7	Norway	76=	Burkina Faso	144	Ethiopia
8	Romania	76=	Senegal	145	Maldives
9	Croatia	78	Gabon	146	Solomon Islands
10	Mexico	79	Albania	147	Rwanda
11	England	80=	Kuwait	148	Dominica
12	Denmark	80=	Bosnia-Herzegovina	149=	Antigua & Barbuda
13	Yugoslavia	82=	Cuba	149=	Cayman Islands
14	Italy	82=	Iraq	151	San Marino
15	Portugal	84	Togo	152	Gambia
16	Sweden	85	Canada	153	Sri Lanka
17	Paraguay	86	Namibia	154	Lesotho
18	Russia	87	Armenia	155	Dominican Republic
19	Netherlands	88	Northern Ireland	156	Laos
20	Scotland	89	Moldova	157	Nepal
21	South Africa	90	Indonesia	158	Yemen
22	United States	91	**AUSTRALIA**	159	Kyrgyzstan
23	Morocco	92	Oman	160	Mauritania
24=	Colombia	93	Guinea	161	British Virgin Is.
24=	Slovakia	94	Congo	162	Surinam
26	Chile	95	Vietnam SR	163	Bermuda
27	Tunisia	96=	Belarus	164	Niger
28=	Ukraine	96=	El Salvador	165	Botswana
28=	Israel	98=	Azerbaijan	166	Chad
30	Austria	98=	Wales	167	Netherlands Antilles
31	Turkey	100	Haiti	168	Eritrea
32=	Poland	101	New Zealand	169	Cambodia
32=	Belgium	102	Mozambique	170	Palestine
34	Cameroon	103	Singapore	171=	Philippines
35	Egypt	104	Kenya	171=	Guyana
36	Greece	105	Liberia	173	Korea DPR
37	Republic of Ireland	106	Qatar	174	Guinea-Bissau
38=	Zambia	107	India	175	Chinese Taipei
38=	Bulgaria	108	Uganda	176	Central African Rep.
40	Saudi Arabia	109	Syria	177	Macao
41	Slovenia	110	Venezuela	178=	Tonga
42=	Uruguay	111	Lebanon	178=	Cape Verde Islands
42=	Iceland	112	Faroe Islands	180	Samoa
44	Peru	113	Malta	181	Pakistan
45=	Jamaica	114	Barbados	182	Cook Islands
45=	Cote d' Ivoire	115	Malawi	183	Papua New Guinea
47	Iran	116	Jordan	184	Vanuatu
48	Korea Republic	117	Malaysia	185	Brunei Darussalam
49	Trinidad & Tobago	118	Mauritius	186	Puerto Rico
50	Hungary	119	Hong Kong	187	Sao Tome e Principe
51=	Nigeria	120	Tajikistan	188	Equatorial Guinea
51=	Switzerland	121	Sierra Leone	189	Bahamas
53=	Ghana	122	Grenada	190	Belize
53=	Lithuania	123	Panama	191	Aruba
55	Finland	124	Libya	192	Seychelles
56	Angola	125=	Luxembourg	193	Nicaragua
57	UAE	125=	Kazakhstan	194	US Virgin Islands
58	Uzbekistan	127	Liechtenstein	195	Djibouti
59=	China PR	128	Myanmar	196	Turks and Caicos Islands
59=	Georgia	129=	Tanzania	197	Somalia
61	Cyprus	129=	Swaziland	198	Guam
62	Japan	131	Turkmenistan	199=	American Samoa
63=	Costa Rica	132	St Lucia	199=	Mongolia
63=	Congo DR	133	Bangladesh	201	Montserrat
65	Thailand	134	Sudan	202	Anguilla
66	Bolivia	135	Burundi		
67	Latvia	136	Madagascar		
68=	Ecuador	137	Fiji		
68=	Zimbabwe				

***Note:** Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.*

TURKS WANT FERGUSON

The Turks of Fenerbahce are preparing a stunning ($30 million) bid for Newcastle's Scottish striker Duncan Ferguson, 28.

Fenerbahce coach Soy Den is a fanatical Ferguson admirer and it seems that money is no object for the famous Istanbul club who know that their support would quickly warm to the Scot's physical style.

Den said: "Ferguson is our top target and I'll do everything in my power to get him here. I've already watched him three times and have been very impressed. I've even bought a book about him because I want to know everything I can about Duncan Ferguson."

But even a profit of ($10m) on Ferguson is not likely to tempt manager Bobby Robson who has helped him produce some of the best football of his career alongside England captain Alan Shearer.

Duncan Ferguson: Money no object for the Turks.

The pair have collected 18 goals in the past 13 games.

The future of Peru's captain Nolberto Solano, 25, is more uncertain, however. Manchester United and Real Madrid are known admirers and, despite Robson's protestations, would be available for £10m.

Newcastle are likely to bank around £600,000 if Hearts follow up their interest in young striker James Coppinger.

Tottenham full back Justin Edinburgh, 29, has completed his £200,000 move to Portsmouth who have also captured £300,000 Derby winger Kevin Harper, 24.

Luis Enrique to miss Euro 2000

Barcelona's Luis Enrique is likely to be out for the rest of the season and could miss the Euro 2000 finals, the club's doctor said last week.

The 29-year-old midfielder was originally expected to be missing for only three weeks, after injuring his left knee in last week's Champions League clash with Porto, but arthoscopic surgery revealed far worse ligament damage than expected.

"I think he will be unable to play for three months. He might as well say goodbye to the season and I think he is also as good as out of the European Championship," Barcelona doctor Josep Borrell said.

"However as long as he is careful with his recovery, there is no reason why he should not be fully fit for the start of next season," Borrell added.

Luis Enrique will be in plaster for the next month.

The injury to Luis Enrique will be a bitter blow to both his club and country.

Barcelona are challenging for their third consecutive Spanish league title. They are third in the 20-team Spanish first division.

The Catalan soccer giant are also in the Champions League second round group phase and the Spanish Cup semi-finals.

Luis Enrique has been regular feature of Spanish sides since he made his international debut as a 20-year-old in 1991, and has 48 caps to his name.

Even if he defies the odds and is fit in time for the Euro 2000 finals, he will certainly miss Spain's friendly international against Italy on March 29 and that alone could mitigate against his selection.

Spanish national coach Jose Antonio Camacho has said that the squad he picks for the Italy game will essentially be the one that travels to Belgium and the Netherlands this summer.

Luis Enrique: Out for the rest of the season.

Van Nistelrooy out 6-8 weeks

PSV Eindhoven striker Ruud Van Nistelrooy will miss six to eight weeks after seriously injuring his knee in a friendly against Silkeborg of Denmark, it was reported last week.

Van Nistelrooy, 23, who is the target of a number of English clubs including Arsenal and Chelsea prepared to bid around 20.0 million pounds (50 million) for his signature, tore the middle ligament in his right knee and has now had the leg placed in a cast.

Van Nistelrooy is the leading scorer in the Dutch first division this season with 29 goals and is likely to leave PSV in the summer.

Ruud Van Nistelrooy

A month ago Van Nistelrooy said that if he did move from PSV he would prefer to move to the Premier League rather than play in Spain or Italy.

Olympiakos fans attack AEK bus

Visiting Olympiakos Piraeus fans attacked a bus packed with AEK Athens supporters shortly before the start of a Greek Cup match between the two rival clubs last week.

The Olympiakos supporters threw stones, pieces of wood and petrol bombs, police said. Four AEK fans were slightly injured ahead of the semifinal, second leg match. The first leg was drawn 1-1.

The violence follows ugly incidents at an AEK v Olympiakos basketball game last weekend when AEK fans threw missiles and tried to attack Olympiakos players after a disputed referee call.

CHELSEA CHASE BAGGIO

Chelsea may rekindle their interest in Dino Baggio, 28, after the Italy midfielder was told by Parma they will listen to offers of around £5million ($12.5 million).

Chelsea manager Gianluca Vialli made an initial attempt to sign Baggio — a Juventus team-mate for two seasons — in 1998 only for the deal to fall through at the last minute.

But Didier Deschamps' failure to settle or impress since his arrival from Juventus last summer — he was dropped this weekend after a woeful display in Marseille — has put increasing doubt over whether he will remain at Stamford Bridge next season.

With Roberto Di Matteo's future also uncertain after an injury-plagued season, Baggio, a mainstay of the Italian national side, could prove a tempting alternative if Chelsea decide to dispense with Deschamps' services.

Baggio's eye for goal from midfield will appeal given that Deschamps has managed just one in 34 appearances this season.

And his robust style — he was responsible for the head wound suffered by Paul Ince in England's goalless World Cup qualifier in Rome two years ago — suggests he will cope with the physical English game.

Baggio has told friends he is keen on the Premiership and the continental culture at Stamford Bridge would make Vialli's club a likely first-choice.

Dino Baggio: Will suit England.

QUEEN HONOURS 1966 HEROES

Queen Elizabeth honoured the five "forgotten" players of England's 1966 World Cup-winning team last week.

George Cohen, Ray Wilson, Nobby Stiles, Roger Hunt and Alan Ball received MBEs (Member of the British Empire) at Buckingham Palace in London.

The awards were announced in the New Year's Honours List following pressure for all 11 players of the team which beat Germany 4-2 in the final at Wembley to be rewarded.

Their six team mates — Bobby Charlton, his brother Jack, Geoff Hurst, Gordon Banks, Martin Peters and the late Bobby Moore — plus the team's manager, Alf Ramsey, who died last April, had all previously received honours.

Tony Blair: Instrumental.

Soccer-mad Prime Minister Tony Blair was instrumental in making sure the remaining five had their day at the palace.

Queen Elizabeth: Full honours given.

After the investiture, Stiles said: "It was great. The five of us all went up together — still as a team. The Queen said she remembered the day and said it was a great event.

"My family was here, which was great. One of my sons was born during the World Cup. He was seven weeks old and he is 34 now."

Ball said: "Barely a day goes by without me being asked about that day (July 30, 1966)."

He said it was a proud moment for the five footballers but declared that "today is more for the families really".

Viv Anderson, the first black footballer to win a full cap for England, also received an MBE at the Palace.

ILLGNER DISLOCATES SHOULDER AGAIN

Real Madrid's former German international goakeeper Bodo Illgner has dislocated his right shoulder for a second time only three weeks after resuming playing, his club said last week.

Illgner had already lost his first team place to 18-year-old Iker Casillas but now he was not even on the bench for Real Madrid's Champions League match at Bayern Munich last week.

The German, who won 54 caps for his country and was part of their 1990 World Cup winning side, was injured in a training session before Real Madrid departed for Germany.

He had been cleared to return to first team action only three weeks ago after spending several months on the sidelines after first dislocating the shoulder. But Illgner was unable to win back his first team place from Casillas.

It is the latest in a series of injuries over the last three seasons for Illgner and will inevitably cause speculation over the future of the 32-year-old goalkeeper who has been at Real Madrid since 1996 and was in goal when they won their record seventh European Cup in 1998.

Bodo Illgner: Injury.

The Spanish media had already been suggesting that Illgner, whose contract finishes at the end of June, would be allowed to leave at the end of the season.

MID-AIR SCARE FOR MAN. UNITED

A British airline last week played down newspaper reports of a mid-air scare involving the Manchester United soccer team.

British tabloids said the players were shaken when the Boeing 757 taking the European champions to France ahead of their Champions League clash with Bordeaux plunged suddenly and without warning.

Monarch Airlines said there was a minor glitch with a back-up computer system monitoring the plane's landing gear but insisted there had been no danger and that the aircraft had not lost height.

"The aircraft didn't lose any height at all and at no time was the safety of the passengers or the aircraft at risk. The vast majority of passengers did not even notice anything had happened," a Monarch spokeswoman said.

She said the pilot noticed that a warning light had not gone out and lowered and raised the landing gear to correct the problem.

The pilot then explained to passengers over the aircraft's public address system what had happened, the spokeswoman said.

The newspapers said the incident occurred 20 minutes after the flight to Bordeaux took off from Manchester.

Britain's top-selling Sun tabloid quoted one of its sports reporters, who was on the flight, as saying: "It was a scary few moments. There was a loud rumbling from under the plane and you felt your ears pop."

The Manchester club is still haunted by the memory of the 1958 Munich air disaster in which 23 people, including eight players from manager Matt Busby's talented young side nicknamed the "Busby Babes", were killed.

WORLD

BECKHAM & FERGUSON CLEAR THE AIR

Alex Ferguson: Understanding.

Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson has resolved his differences with midfielder David Beckham, according to club chairman Martin Edwards.

Beckham was dropped for a top-of-the-table clash against Leeds United last month after failing to turn up for training two days before the game. He said he had been at home looking after his baby who had been ill in the night.

"I am aware that the manager has had a conversation with David Beckham and I have to say I thought and understood that everything has been ironed out between him and David," Edwards said.

"They had a clear-the-air meeting and David is aware of the manager's views. Discipline is the manager's province and after being dropped for the Leeds game they had a chat and the following week he was back in the side again and as far as I am aware there is an understanding there.

"David knows exactly what is expected of him. He has promised to get back to the way of working that has made him such a wonderful asset for us in recent seasons."

Edwards dismissed English newspaper reports that Inter Milan had made a 25 million pound ($62.5 million) bid for the 24-year-old England player, who came second in the World and European Player of the Year polls behind Rivaldo.

"As for Inter Milan making a bid, I am not aware that anyone has made a bid for David," Edwards said.

Beckham still has two years left on his contract with the European and English champions.

Beckham has been linked with Inter, Juventus, Lazio Fiorentina, Barcelona and Bayern Munich after reports that he and his wife, Spice Girls' singer Victoria, want to move abroad.

The couple, who married last July, have bought a mansion in Hertfordshire near London which means Beckham has to make a daily 300-km round trip to Manchester for training.

David Beckham: Differences resolved.

SIX SPURS ON TRANSFER LIST

George Graham has begun a clearout at White Hart Lane by placing SIX players on the transfer list.

The players who can go are Swiss international Ramon Vega, former England B international Ruel Fox, Portuguese winger Jose Domingue (all bought by former manager Gerry Francis), Mark Gower, Neale Fenn and Paul McVeigh.

Vega and Fox cost the club around £8m in transfer fees but Spurs will have to take a substantial loss on them now that manager Graham has told them they are not in his plans for next season.

Ruel Fox: On the outer.

Former boss Gerry Francis: Three signings now on the transfer market.

Francis paid £3.7m for defender Vega in January 1997. Fox joined from Newcastle for £4.2m in October 1995.

Vega, now 28, has won 16 caps for Switzerland but seldom produced his top form for Tottenham, even when compatriot Christian Gross took over from Francis as manager.

Although he contributed a handful of goals, Vega has as many critics as fans at White Hart Lane, where it was said he was dangerous at both ends of the pitch.

He has had a series of injuries, the worst of which was when he broke a bone in his foot during the Worthington Cup Final last season. He made a total of 39 Premiership appearances, scoring five goals. This season he has started only one game — but he scored.

Fox, 32 and only 5ft 6ins, is another who has struggled to capture his best form at Spurs. He terrorised defences when he was at Norwich and, at Newcastle, provided much of the amunition from which Andy Cole profited. This season he has had three appearances, all as substitute.

Dominguez, 26, who is 5ft 3ins, had two stints at Birmingham and played in a variety of roles at Spurs. He has come on as substitute 12 times this season but not started a single game. The other three listed today — Gower, Fenn and McVeigh — are all products of the Tottenham youth scheme.

Neeskens to quit after Euro 2000

Johan Neeskens, the Netherlands' assistant coach, will quit his job with the national side after Euro 2000 to become head trainer of struggling Dutch first division side NEC Nijmegen.

He will succeed Ron de Groot who has been in the job only since the end of November.

Neeskens, who was also an assistant of Guus Hiddink during the 1998 World Cup in France, played 49 times for the national side, including World Cup final appearances in 1974 and 1978.

He spent most of his playing career alongside Johan Cruyff at Ajax Amsterdam and Barcelona.

He was one of the first former internationals to complete the Netherlands' fast-track coaching qualification.

English museum buys 400-year-old football book

The Football Museum in Preston, northern England, said last week it had bought what is said to be the world's oldest book about the game.

"We paid 48,000 pounds ($120,000) for a collection of historic football items including this book," spokesman Kevin Moore said.

The money was provided by the national lottery, he added.

The Italian book, written in 1580 by Giovanni da Bardi, is entitled "Discourse on the game of football" (Discorso sopra il gioco del calcio).

"It's about the mediaeval Italian version of football, one of the roots of the modern game," Moore said.

"But for me the most amazing item in the collection is a jersey from the first ever international game – England versus Scotland in Glasgow in 1872," he said.

The game ended 0-0.

THE BETTING

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Manchester United	$1.33
Leeds	$5.50
Liverpool	$11.00
Arsenal	$15.00
Chelsea	$17.00

EURO 2000

Holland	$4.75
Italy	$6.00
Spain	$7.00
France	$9.00
Germany	$10.00
England	$13.00
Sweden	$17.00
Czech Republic	$19.00
Yugoslavia	$26.00
Norway	$26.00
Portugal	$26.00
Romania	$26.00
Belgium	$26.00
Denmark	$51.00
Turkey	$67.00
Slovenia	$126.00

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Barcelona	$3.50
Lazio	$4.00
Man United	$5.50
Chelsea	$8.00
Real Madrid	$10.00
Bayern Munich	$12.00
Fiorentina	$15.00
Valencia	$21.00
Porto	$26.00
Bordeaux	$81.00
Rosenborg	$81.00
Feyenoord	$101.00
Hertha	$101.00
Marseille	$151.00
Dynamo Kiev	$151.00
Sparta Prague	$501.00

UEFA CUP

Juventus	$5.00
Parma	$7.50
Arsenal	$8.00
Roma	$8.00
Leeds	$12.00
Dep La Coruna	$15.00
Borussia Dortmund	$15.00
Monaco	$17.00
Celta Vigo	$17.00
Atletico Madrid	$21.00
Real Mallorca	$21.00
Galatasaray	$26.00
Udinese	$26.00
Werder Bremen	$34.00
Lens	$41.00
Slavia Prague	$51.00

FA CUP 2000

Chelsea	$2.70
Aston Villa	$3.00
Newcastle	$3.60
Bolton	$9.00

ITALIAN SERIE A

Juventus	$1.80
Lazio	$4.25
Inter Milan	$6.50
AC Milan	$7.50
Roma	$17.00
Parma	$101.00

Losing to United my worst memory - Matthaus

Lothar Matthaus, set to leave Munich to join New York-New Jersey MetroStars, named last year's European Cup final defeat to Manchester United as the worse memory of his Bayern years.

"That has to be the bitterest moment," Matthaus, who played his last competitive match for Bayern against Real Madrid in a Champions League Group C match last week said.

Bayern were leading Manchester United 1-0 in injury time of last May's final in Barcelona but lost 2-1.

The 38-year-old Matthaus, who played for Bayern from 1984 to 1988 and returned to the Bavarian club in 1992 after a four-year spell with Inter Milan, has signed a one-year contract with MetroStars. He flew to New York last Friday.

The record-breaking German international will be back in Munich on May 26 for a farewell game between a Bayern selection and Germany at the Olympic stadium.

Lothar Matthaus: Off to the US.

The captain of Germany's 1990 World Cup-winning side said he hoped Manchester United and England midfielder David Beckham, World Player of the Year Rivaldo and Argentina's former World Cup captain Maradona would come for the occasion.

More than 60,000 fans packed the Olympic stadium for the Real Madrid match, which has been sold out for weeks.

Bayern gave Matthaus a great send off defeating the Spaniards 4-1, scoring four goals against Real madrid twice in a week after a 4-2 win in Madrid.

First as a playmaker, then as a libero, but always in his cherished number 10 shirt, Matthaus helped Bayern win six league titles, two German Cups and the 1996 UEFA Cup.

"Bayern was like a big family to me," he said.

Asked whether he might follow the example of Franz Beckenbauer, who moved to New York club Cosmos in 1977 but returned to the Bundesliga with Hamburg SV in 1980, Matthaus said it was unlikely.

"I can't say for sure but I assume that I will be ending my career abroad," he said.

Matthaus said he was looking forward to living in New York because hardly anybody knew him there and the media pressure would ease considerably.

"I will be able to live anonymously and that means a higher quality of my everyday life," he said.

But he will miss Munich.

"I'm leaving a great city behind," he said. "I will miss my children who live around here and all my friends. And I will miss the Oktoberfest, the beer gardens in the summer and the ski slopes nearby in the winter."

Matthaus, who earned a world record 144th cap in a 2-1 defeat by the Netherlands in a friendly last month, plans to end his international career after this year's European championship finals in Belgium and the Netherlands.

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LEBOEUF WANTS REAL END

Chelsea defender Franck Leboeuf advised French players bidding for a place in the English Premier League to opt for a London club.

But if he had the choice, he would personally go to Real Madrid — and Leboeuf said he hated the training conditions at Chelsea.

"To believe you can easily settle in Middlesbrough, Newcastle or Blackburn when you're French, I don't believe it.

"There is only one reason why we're here – money.

"When you're in London, you have all the opportunities to be happy and live a full life, the French way of life," he said.

"When I arrived in England, the focus was on Eric Cantona," he said.

"The arrival of other French players did not annoy me, quite the opposite. I was happy to lead the way and show that English soccer could also be made for French players," he said.

"Even though the game here is different from anywhere else, it is possible to settle in the English League, but some players made mistakes."

Leboeuf said Chelsea's training facilities were "horrible".

"In all my career, I've never seen such horrible training conditions. Our bosses, who have rented the pitch for the past 15 years, are looking for another place to build a training centre," he said.

"We train in a place which is not functional, open to winds between the motorway and the coffee smells from the nearby plant.

Frank Leboeuf

"Every morning at 10:45, the coach must stop talking because the Concorde is flying past," he said.

Asked about a possible destination should he leave Chelsea, he said: "As far as I'm concerned, I can't see anywhere I could go. Apart from Real Madrid, which is the club for which I've always dreamt I could play, I can't see who else would interest me."

Nine-goal debut for Bolivia coach

Bolivia gave new coach Carlos Aragones a perfect debut last week by hammering hapless Haiti 9-2 in a friendly international.

Roger Suarez scored four goals, including a first-half hat-trick which included two in the first seven minutes, as the South Americans ran riot.

Joaquin Botero scored a hat-trick in less than 25 minutes during the second half while Julio Cesar Baldivieso and Marcelo Carvallo helped themselves to a goal each.

Carlos Marcelin and Frantz Gilles scored in the second half for Haiti, who were unable to cope with the thin air of La Paz.

Aragones replaced Argentine Hector Veira, who lasted less than one year in the job.

WORLD

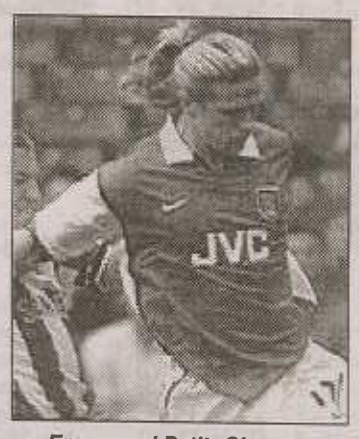
PETIT PONDERS FUTURE

Arsenal's French midfielder Emmanuel Petit, charged with misconduct for allegedly making an obscene gesture to Aston Villa fans in a recent Premier League match, said he was considering leaving England.

"It is far too early to discuss it. But one thing is for sure – I'm asking that question to myself every day," Petit said.

About his gesture, Petit said: "When I sat on the bench I was forced to cope with a lot of racist insults. I cracked up."

The moody French international said he was fed up with being repeatedly insulted in Premier League matches.



Emmanuel Petit: Obscene gesture.

"When you eat porridge every day, there comes a time when you can't take any more," he said.

"A lot of foreigners – with a reputation of coolness – have lost their temper here. For me, I've had to cope with that for three years."

Hot-blooded French players have a history of misconduct in the Premier League.

Petit's Arsenal team mate Patrick Vieira was given a six-match ban in October for spitting at an opponent, and Chelsea's Franck Leboeuf, sent off twice this season, was suspended for two matches last month.

ENGLISH FA WANTS REFS TO USE E-MAIL

English referees are being asked to master online technology as well as the offside rule to speed up disciplinary procedures.

FA spokesman Steve Double said that the soccer body was considering issuing referees with laptop computers and e-mail accounts so that they can send reports straight from stadiums after matches.

"In the 21st century there is little excuse for not having the necessary reports and paperwork by Monday [after a weekend match]," he said.

He said the FA was frustrated by the length of time it took to receive reports on disciplinary offences by post and was asking referees to submit any evidence as soon as possible.

Double would not confirm newspaper reports that the FA was keen to review video evidence and deal with serious breaches of discipline on the same day as the match, before television broadcasted the Saturday night's highlights.

GEORGE BEST IN HOSPITAL

George Best, who has vowed to give up alcohol for good after going into hospital last week with liver problems, was reported to be making improvement.

The 53-year-old former Manchester United and Northern Ireland forward who made his name as a playboy as well as a brilliant player, underwent blood tests at a London hospital, Sky Television news said.

He showed improvement to his liver condition and jaundice, and although recovery will be a long and slow process, it is going in the right direction, the report added.

The hospital confirmed Best's liver complaint was due to alcohol abuse. He is to have further tests during the next few days and is likely to be in hospital for a week.

George Best: In recovery.

Best was arguably one of the finest footballers to have graced a pitch when he played in the 1960s and 1970s, but he also broke the mould of the traditional player.

He became the sport's first pop idol, with a flamboyant lifestyle off the pitch in which glamorous women and alcohol played an influential part.

By the age of 27 his first-class career was over, damaged beyond repair, as he admits, by "the fact that I just wasn't enjoying it any more".

FACTFILE

1946: Born Belfast, May 22

1963: Joined Manchester United as winger, going on to make 361 football league appearances for the club and scoring 137 goals.

1964: Made international debut for Northern Ireland against Wales (37 caps, 9 goals)

1965: Part of United's league championship winning side.

1966: Spearheaded United's 5-1 victory over Benfica in Lisbon — birth of "El Beatle" legend

1967: United win league for second time in three seasons.

1968: United beat Benfica 4-1 to win European Cup — scores great individual goal in the final at Wembley.

Voted English Footballer of the Year and European Footballer of the Year

1970: Became United's top individual scorer in one match, scoring six against Northampton Town in an FA Cup fifth round tie. United won 8-2.

1971: Best's Irish background lead to threats on his life

1972: Announced retirement from soccer at age 27

1973: Brief comeback with Manchester United but earns brief FIFA ban after he quits the club again.

1975: Ban overturned; transfered to Stockport County, scoring twice in three league matches.

1976: Moved to United States and played for Los Angeles Aztecs

1977: Joined Fulham, then in the old second division and enjoyed an Indian summer in west London, scoring eight times in 42 league games.

1980: Sought treatment for alcohol and returned to United States where he played for Golden Bay.

1983: Played five matches for Bournemouth — the last of his top class career.

1985: Found guilty of drink driving and assaulting a police officer and jailed for two months in Ford Open Prison

1985: Began second career as television pundit and after-dinner speaker.

2000: January: Named in FIFA's Soccer Hall of Fame **March 10:** In hospital with liver problems

HONOURS

European Cup (Manchester United 1968)

League Championship (Manchester United 1964-5, 1966-7)

English Footballer of the Year: 1968

European Footballer of the Year: 1968

TV GUIDE

All times are Australian Eastern Standard Summer Time

Tuesday March 14
Brazilian Carioca Football
Optus Vision (ESPN)
2pm - 4pm

Futbol Mundial
SBS TV
4pm – 4.30pm

Wednesday March 15
UEFA Champions League
Lazio v Marseille (LIVE)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
6.30am - 8.45am

UEFA Champions League
Real Madrid v Dynamo Kyiv
Optus Vision (ESPN)
8.45am - 11am

Italian Serie A Football
Football Extra
Optus Vision (ESPN)
3pm - 4pm

UEFA Champions League
Feyenoord v Chelsea
Optus Vision (ESPN)
4pm - 6pm

English Premier League Show
Fox Sports
8.30pm – 10pm

European Soccer Show
(Wrap Up of Euro leagues)
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 12)
10pm - 11pm

Thursday March 16
UEFA Champions League
Manchester Utd v Fiorentina (LIVE)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
6.30am - 8.45am

UEFA Champions League
Barcelona v Hertha BSC
Optus Vision (ESPN)
8.45am - 11am

UEFA Champions League
Bordeaux v Valencia
Optus Vision (ESPN)
4pm - 6pm

Spanish Primera Liga
Teams TBA
Fox Sports
8.30pm – 10.30pm

Soccer Central
(NSL Wrap Up)
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 12)
9pm – 10pm

UEFA Champions League
Full game Replay
SBS TV
10pm – 12am

Friday March 17
UEFA Cup Q/Finals
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Fox Sports
6am – 9am

German Bundesliga
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 13)
3.30pm - 5.30pm

Soccer Scene
Fox Sports
5.30pm – 6.30pm

National Soccer League
Parramatta v Carlton (LIVE)
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 13)
7.30pm - 9.30pm

National Soccer League
Kingz v Northern Spirit
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 13)
9.30pm - 11.30pm

Saturday March 18
English First Division
Blackburn v Crewe
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 13)
10am - 12pm

Soccer Scene
Fox Sports
12pm – 1pm

Scottish FA Cup
Quarter Final
Fox Sports
1pm – 3pm

GOL ESPN
(Wrap Up of Euro 1st Div. leagues)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
2.30pm - 3pm

UEFA Champions League highlights
SBS TV
3.30pm – 4.30pm

World Soccer
SBS TV
4.30pm – 5.30pm

English Premier League Preview
Fox Sports 2
5pm – 5.30pm

English Premier League
(REPEAT)
SBS TV
5.30pm – 6.30pm

English Premier League
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Fox Sports
2am – 4am
(Sunday Morning)

Scottish FA Cup
Quarter Final
Fox Sports
4am – 6am
(Sunday Morning)

Sunday March 19
Italian Serie A
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
6.25am - 8.30am

French Premier League
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 13)
10am - 12pm

English Premier League
Replay Overnight game
Fox Sports 2
10am – 12pm

Italian Soccer League
SBS TV
10.30am – 11.30am

On the Ball
SBS TV
11.30am – 12.30pm

National Soccer League
ABC TV
5pm-7pm

National Soccer League
Marconi v Sydney Olympic (LIVE)
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 12)
6pm – 8pm

Manchester City v Charlton (LIVE)
Optus Vision
(C7 Sport 13)
12am - 2am
(Monday Morning)

English Premier League
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Fox Sports
2am – 5.30am
(Monday Morning)

Monday March 20
Dutch Football
Ajax v FC Twente
Optus Vision (ESPN)
3pm - 5pm

English Premier League highlights
Fox Sports
5.30pm – 6.30pm

English Premier League highlights
SBS TV
7.30pm – 8.30pm

Italian Serie A
Teams TBA (LIVE)
Optus Vision (ESPN)
4am – 6am,
(Tuesday Morning)

ABSW

WORLD

Excludes Monday games

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Bradford City 1 Leeds United 2, Middlesbrough 2 Arsenal 1, Aston Villa 1 Coventry City 0, Chelsea 1 Everton 1, Liverpool 1 Sunderland 1, Manchester United 3 Derby County 1, Newcastle United 1 Watford 0, Sheffield Wednesday 3 West Ham United 1, Tottenham Hotspur 7 Southampton 2, Wimbledon 2 Leicester City 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Manchester Utd	**28**	**18**	**7**	**3**	**63**	**35**	**61**
2. Leeds United	28	18	3	7	44	30	57
3. Chelsea	28	14	8	6	39	25	50
4. Liverpool	27	14	7	6	40	23	49
5. Arsenal	28	14	6	8	48	30	48
6. Tottenham	28	12	6	10	43	32	42
7. Aston Villa	28	11	9	8	33	25	42
8. Everton	28	10	11	7	48	37	41
9. Sunderland	28	11	8	9	45	43	41
10. West Ham Utd	28	11	8	9	39	39	41
11. Leicester City	27	11	5	11	41	40	38
12. Newcastle Utd	28	10	7	11	47	42	37
13. Middlesbrough	28	10	6	12	30	39	36
14. Coventry City	28	8	8	12	35	36	32
15. Wimbledon	28	7	11	10	39	50	32
16. Southampton	28	8	6	14	33	51	30
17. Derby County	28	7	7	14	33	42	28
18. Bradford City	28	6	8	14	28	45	26
19. Sheff Wed	28	5	6	17	27	55	21
20. Watford	28	4	3	21	24	60	15

LEADING SCORERS

24 - Kevin Phillips (Sunderland)
17 - Alan Shearer (Newcastle United), Andy Cole (Manchester United)
15 - Michael Bridges (Leeds United)
14 - Dwight Yorke (Manchester United)
13 - Steffen Iversen (Tottenham Hotspur)
12 - Kevin Campbell (Everton), Paolo Di Canio (West Ham United)
11 - Robbie Keane (Coventry City)
10 - Niall Quinn (Sunderland)
9 - Dion Dublin (Aston Villa), Tony Cottee (Leicester City), Tore Andre Flo (Chelsea), Marians Pahars (Southampton), Carl Cort (Wimbledon), Hamilton Ricard (Middlesbrough)
8 - John Hartson (Wimbledon), Davor Suker (Arsenal), Thierry Henry (Arsenal), Patrik Berger (Liverpool), Chris Armstrong (Tottenham Hotspur).

NATIONWIDE DIVISION ONE

Blackburn 0 Crewe 1, Barnsley 2 Manchester City 1, Bolton 3 Fulham 1, Charlton 0 Swindon 1, Huddersfield 1 Walsall 1, Norwich 0 Crystal Palace 1, Port Vale 2 Sheffield United 3, Portsmouth 2 Nottingham Forest 1, Queens Park Rangers 1 Grimsby 0, Stockport 0 West Bromwich 1, Tranmere 2 Birmingham 1, Wolverhampton 2 Ipswich 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Charlton	**35**	**24**	**5**	**6**	**65**	**32**	**77**
2. Ipswich	36	18	11	7	56	35	65
3. Barnsley	36	19	8	9	71	53	65
4. Manchester City	35	19	7	9	55	32	64
5. Birmingham	36	17	9	10	55	39	60
6. Huddersfield	36	16	9	11	53	39	57
7. Wolverhampton	36	15	10	11	49	40	55
8. Fulham	36	14	13	9	37	31	55
9. Queens Park	36	12	15	9	46	40	51
10. Bolton	35	13	11	11	47	38	50
11. Blackburn	36	12	13	11	41	39	49
12. Sheffield United	36	12	11	13	53	53	47
13. Tranmere	35	13	7	15	46	52	46
14. Grimsby	36	13	7	16	38	54	46
15. Norwich	36	11	12	13	35	39	45
16. Stockport	36	11	11	14	39	52	44
17. Crystal Palace	36	10	12	14	46	54	42
18. Crewe	36	11	8	17	36	45	41
19. Nottingham	36	10	10	16	40	47	40
20. West Bromwich	36	8	15	13	30	45	39
21. Portsmouth	36	9	9	18	39	53	36
22. Walsall	36	8	11	17	38	57	35
23. Port Vale	34	6	11	17	37	50	29
24. Swindon	36	5	11	20	26	59	26

NATIONWIDE DIVISION TWO

Blackpool 2 Cardiff 2, Bournemouth 0 Preston 1, Bristol City 0 Gillingham 1, Bury 0 Bristol Rovers 0, Chesterfield 1 Wigan 1, Colchester 1 Oxford 2, Luton 0 Millwall 2, Notts County 0 Stoke 0, Reading 1 Brentford 0, Scunthorpe 0 Cambridge 3, Wrexham 0 Burnley 1, Wycombe 0 Oldham 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Bristol Rovers	**35**	**21**	**8**	**6**	**57**	**27**	**1**
2. Preston	34	20	9	5	60	31	69
3. Millwall	36	19	9	8	56	37	66
4. Wigan	34	16	15	3	57	29	63
5. Burnley	34	17	10	7	44	30	61
6. Gillingham	32	17	7	8	54	35	58
7. Stoke	35	16	10	9	49	34	58
8. Notts County	36	16	9	11	51	39	57
9. Brentford	36	13	10	13	43	46	49
10. Bristol City	36	10	16	10	41	43	46
11. Luton	36	13	7	16	47	52	46
12. Wycombe	35	11	12	12	43	41	45
13. Bournemouth	36	13	6	17	47	53	45
14. Colchester	36	12	8	16	46	64	44
15. Oldham	34	11	9	14	38	42	42
16. Reading	35	10	12	13	45	53	42
17. Bury	33	9	14	10	45	44	41
18. Wrexham	35	10	10	15	37	50	40
19. Scunthorpe	35	8	11	16	33	54	35
20. Cambridge	35	8	10	17	45	50	34
21. Oxford	35	9	7	19	31	56	34
22. Blackpool	36	7	11	18	39	62	32
23. Cardiff	35	5	15	15	34	49	30
24. Chesterfield	34	5	11	18	22	43	26

NATIONWIDE DIVISION THREE

Barnet 1 Hartlepool 1, Brighton 1 Southend 0, Cheltenham 3 Halifax 0, Chester 0 Shrewsbury 0, Exeter 1 Plymouth 1, Hull City 2 Rochdale 2, Leyton Orient 2 Darlington 1, Mansfield 1 Macclesfield 0, Peterborough 2 Lincoln 2, Torquay 2 Rotherham 1, York 1 Carlisle 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Rotherham	**36**	**21**	**7**	**8**	**60**	**26**	**70**
2. Swansea	35	21	7	7	41	22	70
3. Darlington	35	19	9	7	56	27	66
4. Peterborough	35	18	7	10	50	42	61
5. Northampton	35	17	7	11	45	35	58
6. Barnet	36	16	9	11	46	43	57
7. Hartlepool	36	16	7	13	46	40	55
8. Torquay	34	14	10	10	46	36	52
9. Cheltenham	34	15	7	12	38	31	52
10. Plymouth	35	12	15	8	42	37	51
11. Rochdale	34	14	9	11	38	34	51
12. Mansfield	36	15	6	15	45	47	51
13. Lincoln	35	13	11	11	60	52	50
14. Macclesfield	36	14	8	14	49	46	50
15. Brighton	36	12	11	13	50	40	47
16. Halifax	36	13	8	15	35	43	47
17. Southend	36	12	8	16	45	52	44
18. Hull City	36	10	13	13	33	35	43
19. Leyton Orient	36	11	8	17	37	44	41
20. Exeter	36	9	9	18	37	58	36
21. York	36	7	12	17	31	50	33
22. Shrewsbury	35	7	10	18	25	46	31
23. Chester	36	6	7	23	31	70	25
24. Carlisle	33	5	9	19	30	60	24

SCOTTISH FA CUP

Dundee United 0 Aberdeen 1, Rangers 4 Hearts 1, Ayr 2 Partick 0, Hibernian 3 Falkirk 1.

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

Celtic 4 St Johnstone 1, Hearts v Rangers (postponed), Kilmarnock v Aberdeen (postponed), Motherwell v Dundee Utd (postponed).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Rangers	**24**	**18**	**5**	**1**	**65**	**18**	**59**
2. Celtic	25	16	2	7	70	26	50
3. Motherwell	24	9	8	7	33	41	35
4. Hearts	23	9	6	8	34	30	33
5. Dundee Utd	23	9	4	10	25	36	31
6. Hibernian	25	7	9	9	36	43	30
7. St Johnstone	25	7	8	10	25	31	29
8. Dundee	25	7	3	15	30	51	24
9. Aberdeen	24	6	4	14	30	64	22
10. Kilmarnock	24	3	11	10	25	33	20

SCOTTISH FIRST DIVISION

Livingston 0 Raith 0 St Mirren 8 Clydebank 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. St Mirren	**28**	**17**	**6**	**5**	**64**	**32**	**57**
2. Dunfermline	28	15	10	3	50	26	55
3. Falkirk	28	16	5	7	49	33	53
4. Raith	28	13	7	8	47	33	46
5. Livingston	26	13	7	6	43	29	46
6. Inverness CT	28	10	8	10	44	42	38
7. Ayr	28	8	6	14	30	39	30
8. G Morton	27	7	6	14	38	49	27
9. Airdrie	27	5	7	15	19	51	22
10. Clydebank	28	1	4	23	16	66	7

SCOTTISH DIVISION TWO

Partick v Clyde (postponed), Ross County 3 Alloa 4, Stenhousemuir 2 Queen of South0, Stirling 1 Arbroath 1, Stranraer 2 Hamilton 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Clyde	**25**	**13**	**8**	**4**	**39**	**22**	**47**
2. Alloa	23	9	11	3	33	26	38
3. Partick	27	10	7	10	32	32	37
4. Ross County	25	10	6	9	32	30	36
5. Arbroath	27	8	12	7	39	40	36
6. Stirling	28	10	5	13	51	53	35
7. Stranraer	26	7	13	6	35	30	34
8. Hamilton	26	7	10	9	32	34	31
9. Stenhousemuir	25	8	5	12	33	37	29
10. Queen of South	26	6	5	15	33	55	23

SCOTTISH DIVISION THREE

Cowdenbeath1 Berwick 3, East Stirling 0 Brechin 3, Forfar 0 East Fife 1, Montrose1 Albion 2, Queens Park 2 Dumbarton 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Queens Park	**28**	**14**	**9**	**5**	**43**	**30**	**51**
2. Forfar	28	14	8	6	55	33	50
3. Berwick	26	13	7	6	40	24	45
4. East Fife	26	13	4	9	31	29	43
5. Cowdenbeath	28	12	6	10	46	33	42
6. Dumbarton	26	11	4	11	42	43	37
7. East Stirling	28	9	6	13	23	38	33
8. Brechin	28	8	6	14	34	41	30
9. Montrose	28	8	5	15	32	44	29
10. Albion	28	5	5	18	29	60	2

ITALIAN SERIE A

Bari 0 Parma 1, Cagliari 1 AS Roma 0, AC Milan 3 Verona 3, Perugia 2 Lecce 2, Piacenza 0 Juventus 2, Reggina 0 Udinese 0, Torino 1 Fiorentina 0, Bologna 1 Venezia 1, Lazio 2 Inter Milan 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Juventus	**25**	**16**	**8**	**1**	**37**	**11**	**56**
2. Lazio	25	14	8	3	46	24	50
3. Inter Milan	25	14	5	6	48	23	47
4. AC Milan	25	12	10	3	52	33	46
5. AS Roma	25	13	6	6	50	26	45
6. Parma	25	11	7	7	38	30	40
7. Udinese	25	10	7	8	44	34	37
8. Fiorentina	25	8	9	8	28	30	33
9. Bologna	25	7	9	9	20	24	30
10. Perugia	25	8	6	11	26	43	30
11. Lecce	25	7	8	10	25	35	29
12. Bari	25	7	7	11	27	38	28
13. Torino	25	6	9	10	24	32	27
14. Reggina	25	5	11	9	22	33	26
15. Verona	25	5	9	11	25	38	24
16. Cagliari	25	3	11	11	23	39	20
17. Venezia	25	5	5	15	22	45	20
18. Piacenza	25	3	7	15	13	32	16

LEADING SCORERS

19 - Andriy Shevchenko (AC Milan)
16 - Hernan Crespo (Parma)
15 - Filippo Inzaghi (Juventus), Vincenzo Montella (AS Roma)
14 - Cristiano Lucarelli (Lecce)
13 - Christian Vieri (Inter Milan)
12 - Gabriel Batistuta (Fiorentina), Marco Ferrante (Torino)
11 - Marcelo Salas (Lazio), Oliver Bierhoff (Milan), Marco Delvecchio (Roma), Roberto Muzzi (Udinese)
9 - Mohamed Kallon (Reggina)
8 - Giuseppe Signori (Bologna), Filippo Maniero (Venezia)
7 - Patrick Mboma (Cagliari), Alvaro Recoba (Inter), Francesco Totti (Roma), Stefano Fiore and Martin Joergensen (Udinese)
6 - Ivan Zamorano (Inter), Alessandro Del Piero (Juventus), Zvonimir Boban (Milan), Renato Olive (Perugia), Maurizio Ganz (Venezia)
5 - Yksel Osmanovski (Bari), Daniele Berretta (Cagliari), Simone Inzaghi, Sinisa Mihajlovic and Sebastian Veron (Lazio), Nicola Amoruso (Perugia), Andrea Pirlo (Reggina), Andrea Sottil (Udinese), Adailton and Domenico Morfeo (Verona)

SPANISH PRIMERA LIGA

Alaves 2 Real Sociedad 1, Deportivo Coruna 2 Valencia 0, Espanyol 3 Celta Vigo 0, Malaga 0 Real Mallorca 0, Numancia 1 Real Oviedo 1, Racing Santander 1 Real Zaragoza 2, Valladolid 1 Atletico Madrid 0, Athletic Bilbao 0 Barcelona 4, Real Betis 1 Rayo Vallecano 1, Real Madrid 3 Sevilla 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Deportivo Coruna	**28**	**16**	**4**	**8**	**48**	**33**	**52**
2. Alaves	28	14	6	8	34	28	48
3. Barcelona	28	14	5	9	56	34	47
4. Real Zaragoza	28	12	11	5	47	30	47
5. Real Madrid	28	12	11	5	48	40	47
6. Valencia	28	11	8	9	37	29	41
7. Celta Vigo	28	13	2	13	38	36	41
8. Real Mallorca	28	10	8	10	35	35	38
9. Valladolid	28	10	8	10	26	31	38
10. Malaga	28	9	10	9	39	36	37
11. Athletic Bilbao	28	9	10	9	37	45	37
12. Espanyol	28	9	8	11	43	39	35
13. Rayo Vallecano	28	10	5	13	36	42	35
14. Numancia	28	9	8	11	36	46	35
15. Real Betis	28	9	7	12	26	41	34
16. Racing Santander	28	8	9	11	40	40	33
17. Real Sociedad	28	7	11	10	30	36	32
18. Atletico Madrid	28	8	7	13	38	43	31
19. Real Oviedo	28	7	9	12	28	43	30
20. Sevilla	28	4	11	13	30	45	23

LEADING SCORERS

21 - Salva Ballesta (Racing Santander), Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (Atletico Madrid)
19 - Savo Milosevic (Real Zaragoza)
16 - Catanha (Malaga)
14 - Diego Tristan (Real Mallorca), Raul Gonzalez (Real Madrid)
13 - Roy Makaay (Deportivo Coruna)
11 - Victor Fernandez (Valladolid), Rivaldo (Barcelona), Fernando Morientes (Real Madrid)
10 - Dani Garcia (Barcelona), Gaizka Mendieta (Valencia), Juan Carlos Gomez (Sevilla)
9 - Vassilis Tsartas (Sevilla), Djalminha (Deportivo Coruna), Luis Figo (Barcelona), Patrick Kluivert (Barcelona), Dely Valdes (Oviedo), Raul Tamudo (Espanyol)
8 - Ruben Navarro (Numancia), Pauleta Resendes (Deportivo Coruna), Joseba Etxeberria (Athletic Bilbao)
7 - Miguel Angel Benitez (Espanyol), Rodrigo Fabri (Valladolid), Juanele Castano (Real Zaragoza), Alfonso Perez (Real Betis), Pacheta Rojo (Numancia), Manuel Canabal (Rayo Vallecano), Alexander Mostovoi (Celta Vigo), Finidi George (Real Betis)
6 - Valery Karpin (Celta Vigo), Bolo Perez (Rayo Vallecano), Mario Turdo (Celta Vigo), Julio Salinas (Alaves), Jordi Ferron, (Rayo Vallecano), Turu Flores (Deportivo Coruna), Oscar de Paula (Real Sociedad), Jose Maria Gutierrez (Real Madrid)

GERMAN BUNDESLIGA

Hansa Rostock 1 Borussia Dortmund 0, Werder Bremen 5 SC Freiburg 2, Hamburg SV 1 SSV Ulm 2, Bayer Leverkusen 4 VfL Wolfsburg 1, MSV Duisburg 0 Hertha Berlin 0, Bayern Munich 4 Schalke 04 1, Arminia Bielefeld 2 TSV 1860 Munich 2, SpVgg Unterhaching 1 Kaiserslautern 2, VfB Stuttgart 0 Eintracht Frankfurt 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Bayern Munich	**24**	**16**	**4**	**4**	**51**	**19**	**52**
2. Bayer Leverkusen	24	14	8	2	45	26	50
3. Hamburg SV	24	11	9	4	53	30	42
4. TSV 1860 Munich	24	10	7	7	40	36	37
5. Werder Bremen	24	10	6	8	52	39	36
6. Kaiserslautern	24	11	3	10	34	42	36
7. Hertha Berlin	24	9	8	7	31	37	35
8. VfB Stuttgart	24	10	3	11	28	30	33
9. VfL Wolfsburg	24	8	9	7	35	42	33
10. Borussia Dortmund	24	7	11	6	28	20	32
11. Schalke 04	24	7	10	7	33	33	31
12. SSV Ulm	24	8	6	10	29	35	30
13. SpVgg Unter.	24	8	5	11	26	29	29
14. Hansa Rostock	24	6	9	9	32	45	27
15. SC Freiburg	24	6	8	10	35	33	26
16. Eintracht Frankfurt	24	7	3	14	29	36	24
17. MSV Duisburg	24	3	8	13	24	46	17
18. Arminia Bielefeld	24	3	7	14	22	43	16

WORLD

Excludes Monday games

LEADING SCORERS
13 - Martin Max (TSV 1860 Munich)
12 - Ulf Kirsten (Bayer Leverkusen), Ebbe Sand (Schalke 04)
11 - Ailton (Werder Bremen)
10 - Marco Bode (Werder Bremen)
9 - Magnus Arvidsson (Hansa Rostock), Stefan Beinlich (Bayer Leverkusen), Hans-Joerg Butt, Tony Yeboah (both Hamburg SV), Elber, Paulo Sergio (both Bayern Munich), Michael Preetz (Hertha Berlin), Adel Sellimi (SC Freiburg), Claudio Pizarro (Werder Bremen)

DUTCH DIVISION ONE

PSV Eindhoven 2 Utrecht 1, MVV Maastricht 0 Graafschap Doetinchem 2, Willem II Tilburg 2 Heerenveen 3, Twente Enschede 1 Cambuur Leeuwarden 0, Roda JC Kerkrade 4 Sparta Rotterdam 1, Feyenoord 3 Den Bosch 0, NEC Nijmegen 1 Fortuna Sittard 2, AZ Alkmaar 4 RKC Waalwijk 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. PSV Eindhoven	**25**	**19**	**2**	**4**	**75**	**21**	**59**
2. Feyenoord	25	14	7	4	49	29	49
3. Twente Enschede	25	13	10	2	41	21	49
4. Heerenveen	25	15	3	7	47	29	48
5. Ajax Amsterdam	23	14	5	4	56	32	47
6. AZ Alkmaar	26	14	4	8	56	41	46
7. Vitesse Arnhem	25	12	8	5	48	36	44
8. Roda JC Kerkrade	25	12	4	9	43	35	40
9. Willem II Tilburg	25	11	5	9	41	46	38
10. Utrecht	25	10	3	12	41	46	33
11. RKC Waalwijk	25	10	3	12	34	50	33
12. Sparta Rotterdam	25	9	3	13	36	51	30
13. Graafschap	25	6	8	11	32	38	26
14. Fortuna Sittard	24	5	7	12	31	39	22
15. NEC Nijmegen	25	5	4	16	29	48	19
16. MVV Maastricht	25	4	6	15	31	54	18
18. Cambuur	25	2	6	17	20	52	12
17. Den Bosch	25	2	6	17	22	64	12

FRENCH DIVISION ONE

Racing Lens 0 Troyes 1, Nancy 1 Olympique Lyon 0, AJ Auxerre 0 Monaco 2, Sedan 1 Paris St Germain 1, Olympique Marseille 0, Girondins Bordeaux 2, Bastia 1 Montpellier 0, Nantes 3 Racing Strasbourg 1, Le Havre 1 Metz 0, St-Etienne 1 Stade Rennes 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Monaco	**28**	**18**	**4**	**6**	**56**	**25**	**58**
2. Olympique Lyon	28	13	6	9	35	35	45
3. Paris St Germain	28	12	8	8	40	34	44
4. Sedan	28	12	7	9	38	36	43
5. AJ Auxerre	28	12	6	10	30	30	42
6. Girondins	28	11	8	9	42	35	41
7. Bastia	28	10	10	8	35	30	40
8. St Etienne	28	11	6	11	39	42	39
9. Racing Lens	28	10	7	11	31	30	37
10. Stade Rennes	28	10	7	11	36	36	37
11. Metz	28	7	15	6	32	27	36
12. Racing Strasbourg	28	10	6	12	34	44	36
13. Nantes	28	10	5	13	35	35	35
14. Olympique Mars.	28	8	11	9	34	34	35
15. Nancy	28	9	7	12	32	35	34
16. Le Havre	28	9	7	12	27	39	34
17. Troyes	28	10	2	16	27	45	32
18. Montpellier	28	5	8	15	30	41	23

LEADING SCORERS
18 - Sonny Anderson (Olympique Lyon), David Trezeguet (Monaco)
16 - Marco Simone (Monaco)
15 - Christian (Paris St Germain)
13 - Alex (St Etienne), Lilian Laslandes (Girondins Bordeaux)
12 - Antoine Sibierski (Nantes)
11 - Stephane Guivarc'h (AJ Auxerre), Sylvain Wiltord (Girondins Bordeaux), Shabani Nonda (Stade Rennes)
10 - Tony Cascarino (Nancy)

BELGIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

Mechelen 0 Lokeren 0, Harelbeke 1 Germinal Beerschot 0, Charleroi 2 Beveren 3, Anderlecht 4 Eendracht Aalst 1, Standard Liege 3 Lierse 1, Genk 1 Lommel 2, Excelsior Mouscron 3 Verbroedering Geel 1, Westerlo 3 Sint-Truiden 2, Ghent 2 Club Bruges 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Anderlecht	**26**	**19**	**6**	**1**	**71**	**25**	**63**
2. Standard Liege	26	17	2	7	60	37	53
3. Ghent	26	16	1	9	63	45	49
4. Club Bruges	26	14	4	8	54	27	46
5. Excelsior Mouscron	26	14	4	8	56	38	46
6. Lierse	26	13	5	8	54	34	44
7. Genk	26	12	6	8	52	44	42
8. Germinal Beerschot	26	12	6	8	43	37	42
9. Westerlo	26	11	6	9	48	57	39
10. Mechelen	26	10	4	12	40	56	34
11. Lokeren	26	9	7	10	44	50	34
12. Eendracht Aalst	26	10	2	14	46	55	32
13. Harelbeke	26	9	4	13	49	50	31
14. Beveren	26	6	6	13	35	48	24
15. Sint-Truiden	26	6	4	16	29	56	22
16. Charleroi	26	5	6	14	29	50	21
17. Verbroedering Geel	26	3	9	14	21	48	18
18. Lommel	26	2	10	14	25	54	16

LEADING SCORERS
24 - Ole-Martin Aarst (Ghent)
20 - Toni Brogno (Westerlo)
18 - Jan Koller (Anderlecht)
17 - David Paas (Harelbeke)
15 - Marcin Zewlakow (Excelsior Mouscron)
13 - Eric Van Meir (Lierse) Par Zetterberg (Anderlecht)
11 - Elos Elonga Ekakia (Anderlecht) Sven Vermant (Club Bruges)

PORTUGUESE DIVISION ONE

Alverca 1 Maritimo 1, Campomaiorense 2 Uniao Leiria 0, Farense 0 Vitoria Setubal 0, Gil Vicente 2 Salgueiros 0, Porto 2 Vitoria Guimaraes 1, Braga 0 Sporting Lisbon 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Porto	**25**	**17**	**6**	**2**	**49**	**14**	**57**
2. Sporting Lisbon	25	16	7	2	42	19	55
3. Benfica	24	15	5	4	38	19	50
4. Vitoria Guimaraes	25	13	4	8	38	26	43
5. Gil Vicente	25	10	7	8	33	27	37
6. Maritimo	25	9	9	7	28	25	36
7. Boavista	24	10	5	9	23	21	35
8. Estrela Amadora	24	7	11	6	27	24	32
9. Alverca	25	8	7	10	27	34	31
10. Belenenses	25	6	12	6	27	25	30
11. Rio Ave	25	7	7	11	28	35	28
12. Braga	25	8	3	14	29	35	27
13. Farense	25	6	9	10	23	46	27
14. Campomaiorense	25	7	6	12	23	34	27
15. Salgueiros	25	7	5	12	20	30	26
16. Uniao Leiria	25	6	8	11	23	28	26
17. Santa Clara	24	4	8	12	23	34	20
18. Vitoria Setubal	25	5	5	15	18	38	20

YUGOSLAV DIVISION ONE

Hajduk Belgrade 2 Vojvodina Novi Sad 2, Cukaricki Belgrade 0 Hajduk Kula 0, Sutjeska Niksic 2 Mogren Budva 0, Radnicki Nis 2 Sartid Smederevo 1, Spartak Subotica 3 Milicionar Belgrade 2, Radnicki Kragujevac 1 Borac Cacak 1, OFK Beograd Belgrade 1 Red Star Belgrade 2, Rad Belgrade 1 Zeleznik Belgrade 0, Buducnost Podgorica 1 Zemun Belgrade 0, Partizan Belgrade 0 Obilic Belgrade 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Obilic Belgrade	**27**	**21**	**4**	**2**	**50**	**19**	**67**
2. Partizan Belgrade	26	21	3	2	66	21	66
3. Red Star Belgrade	26	19	6	1	58	16	63
4. Rad Belgrade	27	12	6	9	42	31	42
5. OFK Beograd	27	11	7	9	40	38	40
6. Sutjeska Niksic	27	11	6	10	36	39	39
7. Milicionar Belgrade	27	11	5	11	40	37	38
8. Radnicki	27	10	7	10	25	30	37
9. Buducnost	26	11	3	12	31	30	36
10. Radnicki Nis	27	11	3	13	34	36	36
11. Zeleznik Belgrade	26	9	7	10	31	30	34
12. Vojvodina Novi	27	10	4	13	38	39	34
13. Zemun Belgrade	26	8	7	11	31	39	31
14. Cukaricki Belgrade	25	8	6	11	23	29	30
15. Proleter Zrenjanin	26	7	9	10	23	30	30
16. Hajduk Kula	27	8	6	13	21	30	30
17. Hajduk Belgrade	26	9	3	14	38	49	30
18. Sartid Smederevo	27	8	5	14	25	32	29
19. Mogren Budva	27	8	4	15	25	48	28
20. Spartak Subotica	27	6	5	16	22	49	23
21. Borac Cacak	27	5	4	18	31	59	19

CROATIAN DIVISION ONE

Dinamo 0 Hajduk 0, Sibenik 0 Osijek 2, Cibalia 0 Vukovar 91 1, Varteks 0 Hrv.Dragovoljac 0, Istra 0 Zagreb 0, Rijeka 1 Slaven Belupo 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Dinamo	**22**	**15**	**6**	**1**	**60**	**17**	**51**
2. Hajduk	22	14	5	3	46	21	47
3. Osijek	22	11	4	7	36	32	37
4. Rijeka	22	9	5	8	38	28	32
5. Zagreb	22	7	9	6	27	27	30
6. Cibalia	22	6	9	7	26	25	27
7. Varteks	22	7	5	10	23	31	26
8. Slaven Belupo	22	5	10	7	18	28	25
9. Hrv. Dragovoljac	22	6	6	10	28	41	24
10. Vukovar 91	22	5	6	11	19	33	21
11. Istra	22	5	5	12	22	39	20
12. Sibenik	22	3	8	11	15	36	17

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

Olympiakos Piraeus 3 AEK Athens 0, Iraklis Salonika 1 Panathinaikos 3 , Panionios Athens 4 Xanthi 0, Kavala 1 Aris Salonika 0, Paniliakos Pyrgos 0 PAOK Salonika 4, Ionikos Piraeus 5 Trikala 1, Proodeftiki Piraeus 2 Panahaiki Patras 2, Kalamata v Ethnikos Astir Athens.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Olympiakos P.	**23**	**21**	**0**	**2**	**65**	**14**	**63**
2. Panathinaikos	23	19	3	1	59	15	60
3. OFI Iraklion	22	13	6	9	37	25	45
4. Aris Salonika	23	11	5	7	33	25	38
5. AEK Athens	23	11	4	8	38	30	37
6. Iraklis Salonika	23	11	3	9	40	38	36
7. PAOK Salonika	23	9	8	6	40	28	35
8. Panionios Athens	23	11	1	11	37	42	34
9. Xanthi	23	8	8	7	24	28	32
10. Ionikos Piraeus	23	7	10	6	29	26	31
11. Paniliakos Pyrgos	23	8	4	11	28	30	28
12. Ethnikos Astir	22	7	3	12	19	33	24
13. Kavala	23	6	4	13	22	41	22
14. Panahaiki Patras	23	4	8	11	23	34	20
15. Kalamata	22	4	7	11	21	41	19
16. Trikala	23	4	4	15	20	47	16
17. Proodeftiki	23	3	7	13	16	35	16
18. Apollon Athens	22	3	5	14	15	34	14

ROMANIAN DIVISION ONE

Dinamo Bucharest 5 Universitatea Craiova 2, Steaua Bucharest 2 National Bucharest 3, Arges Pitesti 0 Rapid Bucharest 1, Ceahlaul Piatra Neamt 6 Onesti 0, FCM Bacau 1 Farul Constanta 1, Extensiv Craiova 0 Petrolul Ploiesti 0, Gloria Bistrita 2 Rocar Bucharest 1, Astra Ploiesti 2 CSM Resita 1, Otelul Galati 1 Brasov 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Dinamo Bucharest	**22**	**19**	**2**	**1**	**64**	**17**	**59**
2. Rapid Bucharest	22	14	4	4	38	22	46
3. Arges Pitesti	22	13	3	6	32	18	42
4. Ceahlaul Piatra	21	12	4	5	33	25	40
5. Gloria Bistrita	22	12	2	8	31	27	38
6. Astra Ploiesti	22	10	4	8	34	26	34
7. Steaua Bucharest	21	9	3	9	40	42	30
8. FCM Bacau	22	8	6	8	22	26	30
9. Universitatea	22	8	5	9	28	25	29
10. Otelul Galati	22	8	3	11	34	36	27
11. Petrolul Ploiesti	22	7	5	10	25	33	26
12. National Bucharest	21	7	4	10	30	28	25
13. Brasov	22	7	3	12	31	32	24
14. Rocar Bucharest	21	8	0	13	28	35	24
15. Farul Constanta	22	6	6	10	26	36	24
16. Onesti	22	7	3	12	25	50	24
17. CSM Resita	22	4	6	12	26	48	18
18. Extensiv Craiova	22	4	3	15	15	38	15

HUNGARIAN DIVISION ONE

Nagykanizsa 0 Dunaferr 1, Szombathely 1 Vasas Budapest 2, Tatabanya 2 Nyiregyhaza 1, Siofok 2 MTK Budapest 2, Ferencvaros 8 Vac 0, Kispest Honved 1 Zalaegerszeg 0, Gyor ETO 1 Debrecen 1, Ujpest Budapest 5 Diosgyor 0, Szeged v Pecs postponed.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Dunaferr	**21**	**14**	**6**	**1**	**53**	**17**	**48**
2. MTK Budapest	21	12	7	2	40	17	43
3. Vasas Budapest	20	13	2	5	41	20	41
4. Debrecen	21	10	6	5	31	22	36
5. Ferencvaros	21	9	6	6	42	21	33
6. Ujpest Budapest	21	9	6	6	38	26	33
7. Gyor ETO	21	8	7	6	35	21	31
8. Tatabanya	21	7	9	5	23	27	30
9. Pecs	20	7	8	5	26	29	29
10. Zalaegerszeg	21	6	9	6	22	15	27
11. Kispest Honved	21	6	7	8	21	28	25
12. Nyirseg Spartacus	21	6	5	10	20	35	23
13. Haladas	21	6	3	12	23	33	21
14. Diosgyor	21	5	6	10	19	35	21
15. Nagykanizsa	21	4	7	10	18	27	19
16. Siofok	21	5	5	11	17	32	17
17. Vac	21	2	6	13	18	51	12
18. Szeged	19	3	5	11	13	44	8

JAPANESE LEAGUE

Verdy Kawasaki 2 Gamba Osaka 1, Avispa Fukuoka 2 Kawasaki Frontale 1, Vissel Kobe 1 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 0, Jubilo Iwata 0 Kashiwa Reysol 1, Shimizu S-Pulse 3 Cerezo Osaka 2, JEF United Ichihara 6 Kyoto Purple Sanga 1, Kashima Antlers 1 Nagoya Grampus Eight 0, Yokohama F Marinos 0 FC Tokyo 1.

POLISH DIVISION ONE

Odra Wodzislaw 2 LKS Lodz 0, Petro Plock 1 Wisla Krakow 1, Widzew Lodz 1 Ruch Chorzow 0, Amica Wronki 1 Zaglebie Lubin 1, Ruch Radzionkow 0 Polonia Warsaw 2, Groclin Grodzisk 3 Stomil Olsztyn 2, Pogon Szczecin 4 Lech Poznan 3, Legia Warsaw 0 Gornik Zabrze 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Polonia Warsaw	**17**	**10**	**4**	**3**	**26**	**17**	**34**
2. Ruch Chorzow	17	9	6	2	31	16	33
3. Wisla Krakow	17	8	6	3	30	19	30
4. Pogon Szczecin	17	8	6	3	28	22	30
5. Legia Warsaw	17	6	10	1	31	18	28
6. Amica Wronki	17	6	8	3	28	21	26
7. Zaglebie Lubin	17	6	6	5	15	17	24
8. Stomil Olsytzn	17	6	6	5	20	25	24
9. Gornik Zabrze	17	4	8	5	27	22	20
10. Petro Plock	17	5	5	7	20	25	20
11. Odra Wodzislaw	17	5	4	8	20	23	19
12. Wizdew Lodz	17	4	6	7	22	27	18
13. Ruch Radzionkow	17	5	3	9	15	27	18
14. LKS Lodz	17	3	7	7	14	18	16
15. Lech Poznan	17	3	5	9	23	32	14
16. Groclin Grodzisk	17	2	2	13	12	33	8

SWISS DIVISION ONE

Lucerne 1 Neuchatel Xamax 2, Lausanne Sports 0 Basle 0; Servette 2 Yverdon 0, Grasshoppers 4 St Gallen 4.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. St Gallen	**1**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**4**	**4**	**24**
2. Basle	1	0	1	0	0	0	20
3. Lausanne Sports	1	0	1	0	0	0	19
4. Grasshoppers	1	0	1	0	4	4	18
5. Servette	1	1	0	0	2	0	17
6. Neuchatel Xamax	1	1	0	0	2	1	17
7. Yverdon	1	0	0	1	0	2	15
8. Lucerne	1	0	0	1	1	2	14

AUSTRIAN DIVISION ONE

Bregenz 0 Rapid Viena 3, Austria Vienna 1 Lustenau 0, SV Salzburg 1 LASK Linz 2, Ried 1 Tirol Innsbruck 2, Sturm Graz 6 Graz AK 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1. Rapid Vienna	**24**	**14**	**4**	**6**	**39**	**19**	**46**
2. Tirol Innsbruck	23	14	4	5	35	20	46
3. Sturm Graz	24	12	7	5	45	20	43
4. Ried	24	10	6	8	36	25	36
5. Austria Vienna	24	10	6	8	31	28	36
6. Graz AK	24	10	4	10	30	33	34
7. SV Salzburg	24	8	8	8	24	24	32
8. LASK Linz	24	6	5	13	25	36	23
9. Lustenau	23	4	5	14	16	40	17
10. Bregenz	24	4	5	15	16	52	1

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	Total							Home						Away					
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS	P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	25	14	5	6	47	27	47	12	7	4	1	30	13	13	7	1	5	17	14
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	25	13	7	5	54	35	46	13	9	1	3	29	17	12	4	6	2	25	18
PERTH GLORY	24	13	7	4	46	31	46	12	8	3	1	28	15	12	5	4	3	18	16
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS	25	12	7	6	35	29	43	13	7	4	2	24	16	12	5	3	4	11	13
CARLTON SC	25	11	6	8	39	29	39	13	6	4	3	19	12	12	5	2	5	20	17
MARCONI STALLIONS	25	11	6	8	34	31	39	12	6	2	4	15	14	13	5	4	4	19	17
SOUTH MELBOURNE	24	10	5	9	38	36	35	12	7	2	3	23	12	12	3	3	6	15	24
BRISBANE STRIKERS	25	9	6	10	33	31	33	12	5	4	3	22	13	13	4	2	7	11	18
PARRAMATTA POWER	24	9	5	10	40	36	32	12	5	4	3	21	15	12	4	1	7	19	21
AUCKLAND KINGZ	23	9	5	9	39	41	32	11	5	3	3	20	17	12	4	2	6	19	24
ADELAIDE CITY FORCE	24	8	7	9	33	27	31	13	6	4	3	25	14	11	2	3	6	8	13
NORTHERN SPIRIT	25	9	3	13	29	42	30	13	6	2	5	16	19	12	3	1	8	13	23
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	25	8	6	11	28	43	30	12	5	2	5	13	14	13	3	4	6	15	29
GIPPSLAND FALCONS	25	6	7	12	16	30	25	12	3	3	6	9	13	13	3	4	6	7	17
CANBERRA COSMOS	25	5	7	13	30	47	22	12	3	3	6	13	15	13	2	4	7	17	32
SYDNEY UNITED	25	3	5	17	15	41	14	14	3	3	8	12	20	11	0	2	9	3	21

ROUND 23

CANBERRA COSMOS 0
CARLTON SC 2
(Moreira 40, McPherson 43)

Venue: Bruce Stadium. **Crowd:** 2,106. **Referee:** J Blaney.
Cautions: Burt (CC) 35.
Teams: Canberra Cosmos: Barlow, Burt, Polak (Purdue 78), Winnie (Milin 64), Watkins, Arranz, Hamilton (Musitano 59), Hooker, Clark, Roberts, de Jesus.
Carlton SC: Anastasiadis, McPherson, Douglas (Motsiopoulos 69), Marth (Markovski 78), Slater, Atkinson, Moreira (Dean 69), Lapsansky, Thompson, Conroy, Horvat.

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 0
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 1
(Kelic 76)

Venue: Breakers Stadium. **Crowd:** 4,591. **Referee:** B Precious.
Cautions: Nastevski (MK) 34; Vukadin (MK) 36, Silic (MK) 69, Pryce (NB) 89.
Red Card: Harper (NB) 89.
Teams: Newcastle Breakers: Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus (Trpcevski 80), Sprod, Dodd, Wilson (Angievski 80), Buonavoglia, Owens (Tomich 65), Wieczorek, Harper.
Melbourne Knights: John, Rajher (Pelikan 74), Kovacevic, Vukadin, Silic (Rados 69), Nastevski, Kelic, Magdic, Kiratzoglou, Susa, Vargas.

SYDNEY UNITED 1
(Jerman 89)
CANBERRA COSMOS 1
(Polak 53)

Venue: Sydney Utd Sports Centre. **Crowd:** 2,106. **Referee:** B Hugo.
Cautions: Maric (SU) 29, Burt (CC) 33, Hamilton (CC) 85, Roberts (CC) 87.
Teams: Sydney United: Hughes, Bosnar, Maric, Palapanis (Jerman 74), Rakic, Bozinovski, Sauocca, Genc, Arrarte (Baric), Pondeljak, Bosevski (Zec 60).
Canberra Cosmos: Barlow, Popovich, Burt, Purdue (Kolpak 45), Polak, Watkins, Arranz (Milin 83), Hamilton, Hooker, Roberts, De Jesus (Prenzovski 87).

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
(Cardozo 22)
GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0

Venue: Belmore Sports Ground. **Crowd:** 5,326. **Referee:** J Blaney.
Cautions: Nil
Teams: Sydney Olympic: Perosh: Baillie, Zoricich: Emerton, Zorbas (Tome 88), Thomas, Tsekenis, Mendez (Sinozic 46), Wilson: Arambasic (Kalantzis 65), Cardozo.
Gippsland Falcons: Jevdjevic: Fak, Durakovic, Gotis: Marcina (Savage 71), Robertson, Bell, Vargas: MacNicol, Mandic (Nilo 76), Puca (Katz 83).

NORTHERN SPIRIT 2
(M Babic 7og, Seal 45pen)
MARCONI STALLIONS 1
(Invincible 84)

Venue: North Sydney Oval **Crowd:** 4,384. **Referee:** M Breeze.
Cautions: Smith (MS) 9, Cranney (NS) 15, Rudan (NS) 28, Gibson (MS) 45, Karl (MS) 55, Farah (MS) 85.
Teams: Northern Spirit: Henderson, Enes, Bilokapic, Rudan, Langdon, Cranney, Berti (Crook 74), Perinich (Catanzaro 62), Slater, Curnico, Seal (Griffiths 83).
Marconi Stallions: Turnbull, Gibson, Babic, Longo, Care (Renaud 65), Smith, Invincibile, Farah, Awaritefe (Trajanovski 78), Karl (Duric 75), Zoric.

CARLTON SC 1
(McPherson 82)
BRISBANE STRIKERS 0

Venue: Olympic Park. **Crowd:** 1,402. **Referee:** S Micallef.
Cautions: Hew (BB) 22, Battistin (BB) 54, Atkinson (CSC) 58.
Teams: Carlton SC: Anastasiadis, McPherson, Douglas, Marth, Slater, Atkinson, Moreira (Motsiopoulos 67), Lapsansky, Thompson, Conroy (Markovski 73), Horvat.
Brisbane Strikers: Bolton, Gwynne, Stefanutto, Foster, Srhoj, Hews, North, Battistin, Grierson, Harris (Pilic 72), McKain.

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 5
(Mennillo 48, Reid 59, Horsley 60, Young 85, Blake 92)
AUCKLAND KINGZ 1
(Bunce 29)

Venue: Brandon Park. **Crowd:** 1,402. **Referee:** Simon Micallef.
Cautions: Bunce (AK) 36, Lammers (AK) 51,Van Steeden (AK) 55, Pogliacomi (WW) 56.
Red Card: Bunce (AK) 67
Teams: Wollongong Wolves: Pogliacomi, Ceccolli, Stanton, Cervinski (Souris 66), Horsley, Reid, Young, Chipperfield, Petrovski, Huxley (Spencer 73), Mennillo (Blake 88).
Auckland Kingz: Utting, Bunce, Steeden, Lammers (Suri 67), Perry, Stergiopoulos, Rufer (Moya 87), Jackson (Campbell 87), Ngata, Vicelich, Jones.

PERTH GLORY 2
(Schwertz 19, Trajkovski 64)
PARRAMATTA POWER 1
(Sterjovski 83)

Venue: Perth Oval. **Crowd:** 11,737. **Referee:** M Shield.
Cautions: Plesa (PP) 23, Edwards (PG) 29, Carbone (PG) 39, Sterjovski (PP) 39, Burns (PP) 42, Harnwell (PG) 62, Vrkic (PP) 63, Byrnes (PP) 68, Junior (PG) 87, Despotovski (PG) 89.
Red Cards: Halpin (PG) 73, Byrnes (PP) 87
Teams: Perth Glory: Petkovic, Trajkovski, Carbone, Wehrman, Harnwell, Valle, Junior, Halpin, Edwards, Schwertz, Ergic, (Despotovski 75).
Parramatta Power: Gibson, Barrett, Eagleton, Plesa (Bennett 73), Vrkic, Burns, Sterjovski, Griffiths (Townsend 69), Berry, Byrnes, Gibson (Ardone 73).

LEADING GOALSCORERS

M Curcija	(South Melbourne)	16
P Cardozo	(Sydney Olympic)	15
C Boutsianis	(Perth Glory)	13
A Moreira	(Carlton SC)	12
D Mori	(Adelaide City Force)	12
S Young	(Wollongong Wolves)	12
P Foster	(Brisbane Strikers)	11
J Buonavoglia	(Newcastle Breakers)	10
A Edwards	(Perth Glory)	10
E Masi	(Wollongong Wolves)	10
J Griffiths	(Parramatta Power)	9
I Kelic	(Melbourne Knights)	9
A Marth	(Carlton SC)	9
S Petrovski	(Wollongong Wolves)	9

ABSW PLAYER OF THE YEAR
(PROGRESSIVE POINTS)
TURN TO PAGE 13

ROUND TWENTY SIX

Friday March 17: Auckalnd Kingz v Northern Spirit North Harbour Stadium 7.30pm, Adelaide City Force v Newcastle Breakers Hindmarsh Stadium 8pm. **Canberra Cosmos v South Melbourne Bruce Stadium 7.30pm.** Parramatta Power v Carlton SC Parramatta Stadium 7.30pm. **Saturday March 18: Brisbane Strikers v Sydney United Suncorp Stadium 7pm,** Gippsland Falcons v Wollongong Wolves Falcons Park 7pm. **Melbourne Knights v Perth Glory Knights Stadium 7.30pm. Sunday March 19:** Marconi Stallions v Sydney Olympic Marconi Stadium 6pm.

(All times provided are local times)